

L E T T E R S

F R O M T H E

M A R C H I O N E S S

D E S E' V I G N E',

To her Daughter the

Countess D E G R I G N A N.

L E T T E R S

FROM THE

MUSEUM PRESS

D E S G N E D



The first Daughter the

Countess of GRIGNAN.

Henry Holland Esq.

LETTERS

FROM THE
MARCHIONESS
DE SÉVIGNÉ,
TO HER DAUGHTER

THE
Countess DE GRIGNAN.

Translated from the FRENCH of the last PARIS
E D I T I O N.

VOLUME the TENTH.

She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind.
Graceful to sight, and elegant to thought,
The great are vanquish'd, and the wise are taught.
Her breeding finish'd, and her temper sweet;
When serious, easy; and when gay, discreet;
In glitt'ring scenes o'er her own heart severe,
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere.

YOUNG.



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M DCC LXVIII.



LETTERS
OF THE
MARCHIONESS
DE SÈVIGNE.



LETTER DCCXI.

To the same.

Aurai, Saturday, July 30, 1689.



LOOK where I am, my dear good girl; here upon the south coast of the sea. When was it, that we were in that little cabinet at Paris, two steps from one another? It is to be hoped we shall meet there again. Here

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am

am I, nevertheless, thrown by Providence. I wrote to you on Monday from Rennes all I thought about this journey ; we set out on Tuesday, nothing can equal the care and friendship of Madame de Chaulnes ; her principal attention is, that nothing should be inconvenient to me ; she comes herself to see how I am lodged. And as to M. de Chaulnes, he is often seated at table next me ; and I hear him say in a half whisper, " No, Madame, this will do her no harm ; see how she does ; here is a very good melon, do not think that Brittany is quite without them ; she must eat a small slice." And at length, when I ask him what he is muttering about, he finds himself only answering you, having you always at his elbow, as a monitor to take care of my health. This extravagance is not yet exhausted, and has made us laugh two or three times. We were three days coming from Rennes to Vannes, which is about seven leagues a-day ; this is an easy agreeable manner of travelling, as we constantly met with good dinners and suppers for us ; we every where find communities, compliments and racket, which accompany their graces ; and moreover troops, officers and reviews, which make a charming warlike appearance. The regiment of Carman is very fine, they are all natives of Lower Brittany, tall and better made than the others, but do not understand a word of French, unless it be when they perform their exercise, when they appear as graceful, as if they were dancing of *pas-se-pieds* ; it is a pleasure to see them. I believe Bertrand du Guesclin meant those of this kind, when he said he was invincible at the head of his Bretons. M. and Madame de Chaulnes, M. de Revel, and myself go in a coach ; sometimes

times I make Revel exhaust all Savoy, which affords him a wide field for animadversion ; at another La R— whose follies and violence are inconceivable ; then comes the passage of the Rhine ; this we call winding up the bottom of the whole. We arrived on Thursday night at Vannes ; we lodged at the Bishop's, son to M. d'Argouges ; this is one of the handsomest and most agreeable houses, to be met with, and it is furnished in an elegant style ; a supper was served up with so much magnificence, as to make one die with hunger : I said to Revel, I am famished ; they gave me a young partridge, when I wanted some veal ; a turtle dove, when I wanted the wing of a good pullet of Rennes ; in a word, I had no reason to retract, if you say, you'll eat as much as you please, because you are not hungry ; I say, I have the best appetite in the world, when there is nothing upon the table ; we must, nevertheless, accustom ourselves to this fatigue. M. de la Faluère paid me civilities beyond expression ; his looks and words were all exclamations ; what, is that Madame de Sévigné ! what herself ! Yesterday he gave us a fish dinner ; so that we have seen all that the earth and sea can produce ; this is the land of festivity. I talked with this first president ; he told me very ingenuously, that he greatly disapproved of the bill of review ; for having been informed by M. Fer- rand, his brother-in-law, how the affair was unanimously decided, he was convinced that reason and justice were on your side. I told him a word or two about our battle in the Great Council ; he admired our good fortune, and abhorred that extreme chicanery ; I spoke to him a little about Madame de Buri's behaviour, with regard to the inscription of *false*, upon what she knew to be

LETTERS OF THE

true, the money that this chicanery had cost, upon the complaint she made that her suit had been strangled after twenty-two vacations, upon the delicacy of her conscience, and obstinacy in opposition to the advice of her best friends. M. de la Faluère listened to me with attention, and without being tired, I can assure you ; his wife is at Paris. Afterwards we dined, and the wine of St. Laurence sparkled, and your health was drank in a low voice between M. and Madame de Chaulnes, the Bishop of Vannes, and me, as well as that of M. de Grignan, governor of this admirable nectar ; in fine, my belle, you are talked of at the other end of the world. We saw a very pretty girl, who would do honour to Versailles, but she is to wed *Querignisnidi*, a near relation to Conquet *, and very distant from Trianon. M. de Revel is set out this morning to visit Brest, which is now the finest place that can be seen. He will find M. de Signelai on board his ship, M. le Marshal d'Estrees upon the pavement *des vaches* at Brest ; he will admire one of the finest naval armaments it is possible to see ; he will partake of the impatience with which the Chevalier de Tourville is expected ; he will learn the exact number of the enemies ships at the Isle of Ushant, and will return in four days, having gratified his curiosity, to impart all he has learnt ; this will be winding up the bottom.

Madame de Chaulnes is just gone out, she is going to write to you ; besides the pleasure which I give her, she has that of believing,

* Conquet is situated at the extremity of Brittany, in a place called the end of the world, *ad fines terra*. It is a sea-port.

that

that she communicates a very sensible one to you, in delivering me from the Rocks, which you represented to her quite different from what they are; for the air, which you take to be very bad there, is, in fact, very good; it is a spot that pleases me, the walks being very agreeable, and the manner of living both suits me, and charms me. It is true I was somewhat indisposed there; but I should have been worse elsewhere. The Duchess incessantly tells me, that the beautiful Countess will be charmed to find I have drawn you from the bad air of the Rocks; this being once said, it becomes established. In a word, my dear daughter, you have been the cause of my making this campaign; it is the will of Providence; I accommodate myself to it, because I am of an easy disposition, and love and ought to love M. and Madame de Chaulnes; but when it shall please God to let me return to those Rocks, which you so unjustly decry, I assure you, I shall be perfectly well contented.

Inform me whether in Provence, the parliament does not act the same with regard to the lieutenant-general, as to the governor; and whether the two presidents and six counsellors are not deputed to meet M. de Grignan, a league from Aix, when he arrives there*. Here the first president goes to the governor's, upon his arrival with another president, and six counsellors; and then the governor returns the visit. It is impossible to be received with more politeness than I am every

* This ceremony is only observed once, that is to say, when the governor or lieutenant-governor comes to be received in that quality. Nearly the same order is afterwards observed as in Brittany.

where; I every where find nephews of your father Descartes. I have just received your letter of the 19th. The governors are very commodious, they send their guards, and have their letters sooner than others. I am charmed at receiving your's, it is very agreeable, being full of the remembrance and writing of all the Grignans, whom I love and honour, as you know.



LETTER DCCXII.

To the same.

Aurai, Tuesday, Aug. 2, 1689.

WHILST I am waiting for your letter, I always begin to converse with you. M. de Chaulnes repents greatly of having mentioned to you a journey to Rome, and of making peace with the Pope; he did not know what you derived from this quarrel with the holy see, he is charmed with, and enters into all your notions, and now repeats no other *oration* than your's, *God preserve the Pope*. He says that you are his good genius, that he is continually speaking to you, and hears you. The other day he said to me; *Why do you touch your head, mother? does it ach?* I heard him and answered, *No, daughter, not in the least*. This occasions a kind of play, and continual remembrance of the friendship you entertain for me. I am of opinion, my dear child, that in joking with the Duke upon this genius, which is ever speaking to him; you should say a word to him about the
deputation

deputation of your brother, which you wish and hope for, because this is precisely the year that he can do him a kindness; you will turn this, my dear, much better than I can, and I am persuaded that this solicitation will have a great effect. To tell you the truth, it is absolutely his business, if he is the master, and this is the festival of the nobility of Brittany, as it should seem to be, and not of a courtier, this falls directly upon my son. Nothing can equal the care these governors have of my health, nor the marks of esteem and distinction I receive from them, which sometimes confuses me. The lucky arrival of the Chevalier de Tourville at Brest, will make us return strait to the Rocks; I acknowledge to you that I passionately wish for it, and that if my health were not very good, it would be much affected at this agitation. After having been terrified at the solitude of the Rocks, and the cause of tearing me from them, you should be the means of replacing me there, to pass the remainder of the summer, which is the right season to enjoy those woods, and where, according to all appearances, I never shall pass another. All this should be considered as jesting; but dwell upon the acknowledgment, which their attention for me demands: I admire your governing me at two hundred leagues distance. Let us leave Brittany and speak of the Grignans, who always return to their inn; how astonishing it is that Carcassonne should have left it; this passion is quite childish, and made him say things that our Marquis would not have uttered: the Chevalier listened to them, and read them too with much pleasantry; these then are—how, daughter, do you express it? Oh! *effervescences* of humour; here is a word I never met with before, but it comes from your father.

Descartes, and I honour him on your account. We incessantly meet here with some of his nephews and nieces, all very decent and very amiable. This humour, then, is not very tenacious, it allows reason to come into play; and the same heart that could treat his own brother like a foe, disposes him now to go to Balaruc, at the expence that would raise the floor wanting to his building; but here he is in good temper, may he remain so, may he love and esteem him, and, above all, may he follow his advice, this is the *tu autem*: I believe the heart is returned, with reason for it's attendant; every thing will go better, without this I laugh at momentary friendship, which does no credit to those esteemed. I was charmed to find M. de Carcassonne remembered me, I never doubted that a little reflection would restore me to his good opinion; it will be quite another thing when we see one another.

As to M. de Grignan, I defy him not to love me, and his dear wife also; all those things which occupy his mind, create in me no apprehensions; and as it still is in our power, as he acknowledges to my daughter-in-law, and he loves my son, as if he did him no harm, I assure him also, that I love him, as if he loved me very much; and that I wish to go some day to Grignan, as if he passionately desired me there. What does he say of his master's good fortune? That grand affair, which attracted the attention of all Europe, those twenty-two ships of the Chevalier de Tourville, which were to be attacked in coming to join our fleet, entered Brest, Saturday the 30th of July, at four o'clock in the afternoon, without having seen one single Dutch ship; the great armament which was

to have prevented this junction, and which was at an island very near Belleisle, disappeared, and no one knows what is become of it; as to me I imagine it has formed itself into one of those thick clouds, which we frequently see in the sky.

I am very uneasy about M. de Grignan's journey; what a shell thrown in the midst of you and your tranquility! I pity him, for according to the heat, it was absolutely travelling in the sun; when I think of the inconveniency we met in that cold country near our own, I perspire to think of the golden islands*. In truth, the King deserves all that is done for him, but it must also be owned, that he is very well served; this is the idea we should have of serving God, or rather we should serve him in this manner. I shall not be at rest till you acquaint me with M. de Grignan's safe return. Alas! you say very true, that Providence, which we speak so well about, avails us but very little in those things, which we have sensibly at heart; we are in the wrong; but our weakness is but too apparent upon every occasion.

Madame de la Fayette writes to me, that she had written to you, to enquire of your welfare, and that of the Chevalier and Paulina; her son is very well at Brest. He has had a foolish affair in the army of the Marshal d'Humières, wherein Nogaret has been dangerously wounded†. Were he to die, I would renew the antient alli-

* These islands are situated upon the coast of Provence, and are known by the appellation of the islands of Hieres.

† See the memoirs of the court of France, written by Madame de la Fayette, p. 126, and 127.

ance on that side, by a marriage between the Marquis and that pretty heiress. M. d'Arles is at Forges; I imagined as you did, that he was solely employed about your affairs; but can he aver this, without laughing?

You have not spoke to me this time about the Chevalier; I thought he would drink the waters in autumn and spring, and pass the winter in your temperate clime; but if he does not, I shall always think he is in the right. As to me, I know not whether a desire of seeing you this winter at Paris, would have made me surmount impossibilities; but I can assure you, this would have been precisely the object I had to combat, no money to be had but sword in hand, trifling creditors who still strangle me, coach horses to purchase; so that I know not how I could have done to have avoided ever after the inconveniences arising from this irregularity; whereas, in following your example, and passing the winter in this country, like you in Provence, I shall have time to breathe; I think this regimen is as good for you, as it is for myself. This letter is just going, no courier is yet arrived from Brest, but the news is confirmed by people come from thence, you will hear it from Paris.

LETTER



LETTER DCCXIII.

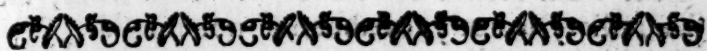
To the same.

Aurai, Saturday, Aug. 6, 1689.

EVERY thing sparkles with joy in this province upon the arrival of the Chevalier de Tourville at Brest: M. de Revel has seen this lucky moment; Tourville's squadron was so little expected, that it was thought to be the enemy's; and when he made himself known, it afforded joy and a very agreeable surprize. He set sail very skilfully, and with much resolution; he judged that the wind which would bring him to Brest, would oblige the ships at the Isle of Ushant to quit their station, as it would drive them back upon the island. This was so true, that they came out to gain the open sea behind, where they were so far from being able to incommode us, that the Chevalier de Tourville passed by the same place, which they were obliged to leave, and knew not what was become of them; he came full sail into Brest harbour, where he was received with much commendation for having so well judged and profited of the wind. M. de Seignelai is on board his ship, where he lives well; Count d'Estrées is his friend, and frequently sends him provisions; but the Marshal seldom sees him, being on shore, receiving the second visits, and keeping a table that sometimes is not filled; there is nothing to

be said upon so violent a situation. The regiments of la Fere and d'Antin have orders to march into Normandy; Carman's and two others of this Province, are going to Brest; and two regiments of dragoons will return into Poitou. The *Noblesse* are going to be disbanded; so that things wear a more peaceable appearance. One day we shall go to Port Louis, and another to Vannes, because the first president is desirous of seeing M. de Chaulnès in parliament; and from thence we shall return to Rennes, about the 20th or 22d, and then to those peaceable Rocks; this is our plan, my dear child, I am charmed with having given this mark of friendship and complaisance to the governors; this is what I fully owed them, and they have repaid me two-fold. M. and Madame de Soubise are gone to meet their son*, who it is said, must have a leg cut off; you know upon what a foolish occasion. Nothing yet transpires concerning the camp of Boufflers. I think only of that, *God preserve our dear child*; our success at Brest makes us judge of all the rest. Adieu, my dear Countess, I tenderly embrace you. You drink coffee and chocolate in a very torrid clime, very hot dog-days, take care of yourself and me; for, indeed, we must at such a distance, avoid uneasiness and preserve ourselves.

* Lewis, Prince de Rohan, was wounded the 9th of July, in the same affair as M. de Nogaret.



L E T T E R DCCXIV.

To the same.

Aurai, Tuesday, Aug. 9, 1689.

WE are easily induced to believe, that the heats which M. de Grignan endures, must be very intense, as it is most violently hot here, though we are so near the sea. Really these are none of the dog-days of Livri, which we thought so ridiculous; these are quite without rain, we perspire all day long, and we think this is a charming thing for our health. We shall go to-morrow to Port Louis. I shall give your letter to M. de Chaulnes, but not before to-morrow, for he is to-day quite overwhelmed. The pleasantry of *this genius* which prompts him to take care of my health, makes us laugh still; your assiduity and attention for the preservation of my person, have made such an impression on him, that the recollection of it gives us pleasure, and keeps up a continual correspondence with you. He says, when I eat prudently, he is divided between the pleasure of being convinced of my health, and the displeasure of your having nothing to say to him; a ragout, a sallad with cucumbers, nuts, and such like food, keep up a connexion with you, which however superficial, is very agreeable to him. He consults you with regard to Port Louis. He thought the other day that you wanted him to return to Rennes; I gave him leave for you to be

absent from thence till the 18th. In a word, all this raillery is not yet exhausted nor insipid.

You are acquainted with all our success at Brest, and that we have only three regiments of Bretons to countenance Marshal d'Estrées, at Brest. The care which people wants him to have of this place when our fleet is set sail, resembles *Trivein's* bit of paper, in which were contained one hundred pistoles. The miraculous part of this affair, is the silence and wisdom of Marshal d'Estrées' lady *. The king himself is so much surprized at it, that he has complimented her thereupon, and praised her in such a manner, as to oblige her to persevere in it. M. de Seignelai was very much diverted at Brest whilst Revel was there; he loves Count d'Estrées †, and says that this Count was very willing to be his friend, but that the Marshal rejected his friendship. No orders are yet received for the fleet's sailing, we hear that the siege of Mentz is raised; we hope for prosperity on every side. Four lines are made upon the Pope, which end in wishing for his relicks: as to me you know what I wish him.

M. de Soubise's son and Nogaret are recovered of their wounds, all this you know, my dearest life, and may God equally preserve our dearest child. I shall pay your compliments to Madame de Lavardin; but a word from you to that good woman, would be very à-propos. She

* Mary Margaret Morin, wife to Marshal d'Estrées.

† Victor-Mary Count d'Estrées, afterwards Vice-Admiral and Marshal of France, as was then John Count d'Estrées, his father.

was afraid she should lose her daughter-in-law, who was given over, and also her grandson and grand-daughter, who were afflicted with the measles in the most violent manner. I am very well satisfied with the inventory of M——'s effects; I would not have you otherwise than sincere: I could wish that he had not so many debts, and those fine moveables were not so often in pawn; but the friend to whom I imparted all these truths, is not terrified at them, and still thinks it is the best match her relation can possibly get, so that this sincerity will not spoil any thing. I long to know how M. de Grignan does. Is not the Chevalier at Balaruc? You give me a pretty picture of Paulina's oeconomy, to say no more; it is pleasant to see her act naturally for the preservation of little amusements; there is nothing to be dreaded from the name it bears. I would, however, have her weaned from filthy niggardliness, that carries with it an air of duty, and depicts avarice without any advantage, for such covetousness should ever be exploded; I have long since been at war with these misers, for it is the only prevailing passion here. I love Paulina, every thing you tell me of her, gives me pleasure; I hope she will have her health, and that those waters will restore it, as well as Martillac's. Adieu, my child, I am very distant, and yet very near you; I will not pretend to tell you how tenderly I love you, you may nearly divine it, not only from the natural taste I have for your wit and person, but also from the esteem and admiration I entertain for your heart, where I hold so valuable a place.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R DCCXV.

To the same.

Aurai, Saturday, Aug. 13, 1689.

THE packet which I thought was lost, is arrived at it's destination; I had great reason to regret it, containing all that I am fond of knowing; I should be sorry not to be acquainted with all the hotels you build, and the names which are so proper for them.

We shall be on Tuesday at Rennes, our return is hastened two or three days, on account of a courier which M. de Chaulnes has dispatched for Paris; his dispatches are said to relate to the affairs of the states, we shall see: but, however, he sets off immediately; I shall acquaint you with my fate, and the day I return to my state of tranquillity at the Rocks. My son and his wife are at Rennes; we have within these three days taken one of the prettiest journies in the world to Port Louis, which is a very fine place, the situation of which you are acquainted with; you have always that fine extensive sea before your eyes; were you to turn, you would behold the dreadful physiognomy of M. de Mazarin*;

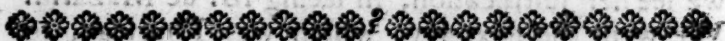
* Armand-Charles de la Porte, Duke de Mazarin, was high-Bailiff of Haguenau, governor of Upper and Lower Alsace, and the city and castle of Brisack, &c.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 17

of all places he might have chosen to command, he has fixed upon that where he is not the master, but his son; and moreover this place is in the government of M. de Chaulnes. There is no accounting for the extravagance of this man; he is mad, and dresses like a beggar; devotion has quite turned his brain. We were willing to persuade him to send for his wife from England *, where she is in danger of being expelled or perverted, and where she remains with the King's enemies. He always says she shall come with him;—with him—good heaven! let us say with St. Evremond, that she is dispensed from common rules, and that we see her justification, in seeing M. de Mazarin. We went the next day, which was Thursday, to a place called L'Orient, which advances a league into the sea; here the merchants and merchandize from Orient are received. One M. le Bret, who is just arrived from Siam, and who has the care of this trade, and his wife who is come to Paris, and is more magnificent here than they are at Versailles, gave us a dinner; we made her husband give an account of his voyage, which was very diverting. We saw great quantities of goods, china, stuffs, that please the eye. If you were not the Queen of the Mediterranean, I would have endeavoured to have got you a pretty stuff for a night gown, but I should have thought to have wronged you. We returned at night with the tide and fine weather, and lay at Hennebon; your map will shew you the situation of these places;

* Hortensia Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, and niece to the minister and cardinal of that name, died in England, July 2, 1699. See what is said in the works of St. Evremond, and those of the Abbé de St. Real.

it was yesterday as we were setting out from this city, that the courier arrived, whom you will hear spoken of. My most amiable Countess, I comprehend the advantages you derive from this county, and with what pleasure you send money to Paris; this justice should preserve the Pope's health, I tremble every time a courier arrives: if God would permit the goodness of Providence to continue some years, this would be complete grace. Adieu, my child, I am hurried, I hear a noise for me, I will write to you from Rennes, and answer both your letters.



LETTER DCCXVI.

To the same.

Rennes, Wednesday, Aug. 17, 1689.

INDEED, my dear child, I have many things to tell you and answer you. I shall resume my letter where the courier came to meet M. de Chaulnes at Hennebon; he carried a letter from the King, which I have seen filled with such orders as must command obedience, vigilance, and even impossibilities. The decisive style and manner of M. de Louvois were easily discovered, which do not ask whether you can make a journey to Rome? He will neither allow delay nor excuses, he anticipates every thing. The King says, "that he has resolved to send him to Rome, because he thinks him alone capable of doing the greatest thing in Europe, in giving to the church

church a chief, who may equally govern the church, and content all the world, and France in particular; that he is informed that the Pope cannot live long; that the satisfaction he received from the other two exaltations made by M. de Chaulnes*, answers for the success of this, which is the most important; wherefore M. de Chaulnes must set out immediately to receive his orders; that the French Cardinals hold themselves in readiness; that Marshal d'Estrees be invested with the command of Brittany; that M. de Chaulnes's journey will not be of any long duration; and that he will recall him as soon as there is a new Pope." M. de Croissi adds to all this, "that the King cannot doubt of the success of affairs, of which M. de Chaulnes is to be the negociator; that his Majesty, knowing that his affairs are not in a good situation, will give what is necessary for so sudden and important a journey; and that he must come, and the journey will be short, and so much to his glory, that he is persuaded M. de Chaulnes will joyfully obey: nevertheless, he is not to mention it yet." So that our little corps is in sufficient motion; M. de Revel and me are confident, enjoined to secrecy: M. de Chaulnes divided between the gratification of a taste arising from self-love, for this commission, which he is sent for from the utmost extremity of Brittany to execute, and which is a most brilliant embassy; and the regret of quitting the states, where there will be much business, and where he might equally have served the King and the Province. As to Madame de Chaulnes she sets no bounds to her sighs and tears; absence,

* This was M. de Chaulnes's third Embassy to Rome.

a long voyage, an advanced age; she does not take into consideration their extreme want of money, she only sings a doleful ditty about the fatigues of a long journey. Our return to Rennes is hastened two or three days; it is said the King will be pleased at M. de Chaulnes making a tour to court before the States; those who have a good nose, smell out the drift of the journey to Rome. We shall lie at Aurai, and dine the next day at Vannes. M. de Chaulnes will appear in Parliament, to pay a decent compliment to the first President. Scarce was he alighted from his chaise at the Bishops, before this Prelate said to him, "Sir, I want my bulls of you." The other said, "Sir, we are both rejoiced and afflicted." He made no answer, but dressed himself in black, and went to the Parliament; the first President in the compliment he paid him, obliquely hinted at the honourable negotiation he was going to undertake; the Duke was embarrassed, and made an answer no way to the point; at length he finished his answer, returned, undressed and dined. Madame de Chaulnes is overwhelmed with compliments, she still answers, She is not in the secret, that the King is master; so that we find our poor secret every where bandied about. We dined at the Bishop's, where there was one of the finest and most sumptuous entertainments I ever saw; we set out after dinner, which was Saturday; we lay on Sunday six leagues from hence; and on Monday, a good day and a good day's work, we arrived at Rennes. I undertook upon the road, to set forth to Madame de Chaulnes the agreeable side and distinction of this choice only; and I suppressed or endeavoured to suppress all other considerations; and I believe I succeeded. We made
M.

M. de Chaulnes give an account of his different journies to Rome, and we found in him such a great share of understanding, so well adapted to negotiation in that country, where he is still adored, that we applauded his Majesty's nomination. He said, that if it had been to make peace with the Pope, he would have refused the commission, knowing of how much disservice he would have been to you; but that he would intreat you to consider, that he would not work against you, till such time as death had worked against the Pope; so that it would be death, and not him, that would do all the harm; that he would see you; that he was charmed to think that after all the whims he had told you concerning his journey to Rome, it should really take place, this was a long and merry dissertation. Madame de Chaulnes is to set out two days after him, I believe his departure is fixed for to-morrow. This Duchess wants to take me with her, she says it is your pleasure, she is really sorry to leave me; we make reflections upon the unexpected and inconvenient dispositions of Providence. We were to have passed the winter in the country; I was to return for a month to the Rocks, I promised to go in the beginning of October to St. Malo's, then to the States, then again for a short time to the Rocks, then to Rennes from Lent till after Easter; and all this has turned out, that in four days M. and Madame de Chaulnes remain no longer in this Province, that I am going to the Rocks with your brother and his wife; and that I shall there pass the winter more agreeably than any where else, being deprived of the company of these good governors. I send and shall send a little money to Paris; this retreat to the Rocks is my county, and this justice shall constitute

tute my felicity. I shall have the agreeable prospect of meeting you next year at Paris, this is my hope, and it is all I implore of heaven; for I am disabused with regard to the schemes of man. I am thoroughly persuaded that M. de Chaulnes in speaking to the King of Brittany, will propose my son for the deputation, and I do not believe this post will be refused him; I know that he wishes to do this pleasure, he loves to surprize agreeably. Madame de Chaulnes is as desirous of it as I am. I will one day relate to you in what a decent, tender manner she has always behaved to me; but this is at an end, and I am very happy to be fond of the Rocks, and those that are masters there, and the life they lead. I find myself in my own natural state, which I will never quit but for you.

I transmitted your answer to M. de Chaulnes; he shewed it to us; it is very pretty, and I do not comprehend how a person, who praises me for answering trifles so well, can think that her's to the Duke should be either dull or insipid. I tell you that you should not form such judgments, as you treat these matters in the only manner that is proper, and with all possible imagination. Revel was greatly astonished at this style.

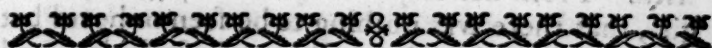
If M. de Lavardin's * countenance disturbs you, many are affected by it in the same manner; he does not, you find, return to Rome, he will not hold the States, because he would

* M. de Lavardin was Lieutenant-general in the government of Brittany.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 23

not be under the command of M. d'Estrées ; he acknowledges only the governor ; so that probably M. de Revel will supply his place under the Marshal.

If you see M. de Chaulnes either at Grignan or Avignon, I request of you, my dear belle, to give him some testimonies of friendship and gratitude, for all he has done for me ; it is in this manner I beg you will pay my debts. M. de Grignan will be charmed to do him the honours of his government ; I am sensible you know what to do and say, when you have a mind ; so that in adding my prayer, my mind is easy.



L E T T E R DCCXVII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, August 21, 1689.

HERE am I, then, again amongst those Rocks you so much dread, and which, nevertheless, have nothing so terrific in them. There is no longer any Duke or Dukes of Chaulnes in this country : they left me with great regret ; they wanted to carry me back from the place they took me up, and I imposed much violence upon myself in refusing them ; but my journey would have been useless, had it been so short, and which I endeavour to render otherwise since I am here : upon such occasions, *the heart flies*

to Paris, but reason remains in Brittany. In a word, my daughter, such is the situation of things; it cost me some tears to see this good Duchess set out; she would not, however, bid me adieu; but I was awake, and I was touched with the situation in which I left her; for you will know that all the beauty of this choice and this embassy, which she is perfectly well acquainted with, does not prevent her being uneasy lest this long journey should be fatal to her husband; he has been twice at Rome, but he is now twenty-three years older than when he returned from thence last; she is one of the most sensible women in the world, with an air that you are well acquainted with. From hence you may conclude, my dear girl, that there was nothing to be seen or heard but tears and sighs, in quitting Rennes last Friday, and all the night she was here, whither M. de Revel accompanied her: she set out very early yesterday morning, and makes long stages, because she wants to meet M. de Chaulnes again, who is still at Versailles, so that this journey will, in every respect, be fatiguing. When she is at Paris, objects, business, and friends may console her; but she was quite overwhelmed here. I must tell you, by the bye, that Revel, who is a connoisseur, is quite pleased with this desert, and the variegated alleys. He set out this morning. M. de Chaulnes told my son, that the deputation would perhaps be more certain, by the audience the King would give him upon Brittany, than if he had remained here to hold the states. Wherefore we expect to hear from him; if he sends us agreeable news, which he wishes for as much as we do, my son will accompany me to Paris next spring: I lay before you these thoughts, reminding you at the same

same time that God is above us all. When Marshal d'Estrées, who remains at Brest, was obliged to retire from the fleet, in which he was stationed, and see it sail under the command of M. de Seignelai, I must acknowledge that the most refined policy would pronounce the agitations of the Marshal's mind to have been the highest disgust a man of that dignity could express. But the King, who was acquainted with the destiny of M. de Chaulnes, might think of consoling the Marshal with the command of the place, in the absence of the Governor; however, as it was impossible that M. de Chaulnes could at the same time command at Brest, and in the other parts of Brittany, Marshal d'Estrées was very naturally with his ships, and the garrisons of the two Bishopricks, where he had two regiments under his command; this had not the air of superseding the governor, the service required his acting in this manner; it was never designed to give M. de Chaulnes any mortification, during his stay in Brittany; and if the Marshal had waited, a general officer would have been left at Brest, with the command of the ships [that are always in the road, and such as might come in; which will be the case whilst the Marshal commands in Brittany, and holds the States and M. de Revel under him. I have already told you, that M. de Lavardin is, at present, invested with no other post, than that of Commandant in the room of M. de Chaulnes. We are informed here that the capricious humour of the Marshal, of which the King was informed, and which occasioned a misunderstanding with all in subordination to him, was the real cause of the order which he received in the King's own hand to remain at Brest. M. de Pommereuil, has, perhaps, undesignedly, con-

tributed to it, in giving an exact account of what he had seen; the departure of our governors has thrown him into despair, he loved them, and agreed very well with them: the case is very different with the Marshal. These gentlemen, though so great, are not all acquainted with the proper manner of treating with the States; for this reason it is to be hoped, that M. de Chaulnes will hold them with the King and his ministers at Versailles, and will send them back with the business all settled. This is the way we reason in the country. M. de Pommereuil, who is temporary judge-advocate for the troops, will be invested with a particular commission for the States; his kinsman is second Commissary; there are always two of this kind whilst the States are held. I imagine, my dear child, that I have said more upon this subject than you will think necessary or desire: this inundation of words is occasioned by my not having received your letter. Do not fear that I shall turn hermit, my son would prevent this, as well as a thousand visitors he hath, who are perhaps too numerous. It is the finest weather imaginable, and I am going to renew my avocations, my reading, my walks, as there is no fog; make yourself easy about your dear mamma, who preserves herself for you; preserve yourself for her. Give my compliments to the Chevalier upon the new dignity conferred upon M. de Beauvillier*; the King has entirely adopted the Chevalier's sentiments upon this occasion. Thus his Majesty makes three M. de Beauvilliers

* Paul, Duke of Beauvillier, was named at that time Governor to the three Princes, sons of the King's brother. Francis de Salignac de la Motte-Fénelon was appointed their preceptor, and afterwards created Archbishop of Cambrai.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 27

of a single man; this is just what ought to have been done; St. Lewis himself could not have made a better choice. This Abbé de Fénelon is another extraordinary genius, for sense, knowledge and piety. I heartily rejoice with the Chevalier, whom I imagine to be at Balaruc. Do the waters continue being efficacious to Paulina and Martillac? and is fortune always favourable to the India company, in letting them play a winning game?



L E T T E R DCCXVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, Aug. 24, 1689.

WE hear from Paris, that they waited with impatience for M. de Chaulnes; he ought to have arrived there Sunday the 21st of this month. The Pope, our dear holy father, who left us that very lucky county, was, according to the last advices, at the point of death: so that he must have set out, and you will have M. de Chaulnes soon with you. Madame de Chaulnes, who travels very fast and makes long stages, considering the intense heat of the weather, hurries in vain, for she will arrive too late. It was said, that the Cardinals de Bouillon and le Camus, would not be of the journey; but this news does not meet with confirmation.

It is assured that M. de Lavardin is coming to hold the States; I am charmed at it, for the love I bear his mother, who seemed more affected than himself at his not being countenanced; here is an appointment for him, thank God, that is quite natural, and which all Brittany will rejoice at. The Marshal d'Estrées will command, except only with regard to the States, so that I see no place for M. de Revel. I must acknowledge, that we have been greatly exposed to the merit of the latter; but we have supported his appearance; all that we have done in his behalf, is to comprehend that he has been much beloved by many kinds of women, and we are contented with being his confidants; his eloquence has not seduced us, it has only diverted us; we could not help sometimes admiring the happy manner of his expression and the turn of his periods; the rage of le R—like, that of Medea, is admirable; the powers of a Champmélé, to preserve all her lovers without depreciating the parts of *Atalide*, *Berenice* or *Phedra*, make us travel thirty leagues very pleasantly; war comes in turn, the passage of the Rhine, the battle of Senef, M. de Turenne's campaigns, without entering upon the whole extent of Savoy—You see here is plenty of matter; but I must now praise him, because in all his recitals, we have never found him swerve from truth, to raise an altar to his vanity; so that there may be still some doubts with regard to his reputation as to courage, for this is a chord he has never touched upon*; and if M. de Grignan is

* Courage is like birth; those who are constantly boasting of the one or the other, are naturally suspected of imposition. Those on the contrary, in whom valour or nobility is not equivocal, not only lose nothing by their silence, but they gain by leaving to others the assiduity of doing honour to truth.

willing

willing to tell me what he thinks upon this head, I am still ready to take what impressiion he chuses to make upon me. The Marquis and I have agreed to listen to the Chevalier, with regard to the reputation of courtiers as an oracle : and that our esteem or it's opposite would be excited, according to his decisions. I am still of the same way of thinking, and I believe the Marquis is also; wherefore I intreat him, to tell me how I should consider M. de Revel*. Methinks my opinion is perfectly settled with regard to the Marquis's merit, his application and emulation are his vouchers—never was there such an happy dawning—*God preserve him, God preserve him.*

I should be transported to have a picture of Paulina, bring one with you, I assure you it will please me; I have a pretty good idea of her, I give her a little of the Count des Chapelles, a little of the handsome part of Grignan, which together make a very pretty figure, with a noble air, sense, and wit, which fits well upon her, and this little beauty I caress and embrace most heartily. Preserve yourself, my dear Countess, for yourself, your family, your son, your mother. I do not forbid your eating melons, since you have such good wine to mellow them; M. de Chaulnes forbade them me on your account, and I submitted because they were not good; but he was obliged to let me perspire; I returned at night to Aurai after a gentle walk, just as if I had come from playing

* Charles-Amedeus Broglio, Count of Revel, lieutenant-general of the King's armies, afterwards Knight of the orders. He was brother to Victor-Maurice Count de Broglio, Marshal of France, and uncle to Francis Marshal Duke de Broglio.

a game at long tennis; I undrest, and was rubbed dry, and came to supper quite fresh; I laughed at myself the first, that others might not laugh at me; and with this, I am quite in health. It was very hot, and I have always been subject to perspiration; and I think it were better not to change one's constitution; I do not think this should be stiled an *effervescence*; methinks my pot did not boil a bit fiercer, and there was no occasion to scum it oftener than usual. I think I told you that M. de Chaulnes spoke to us several times very kindly about the deputation, saying it was his business, and I expect soon some news about it. My son is gone upon a visit of pleasure four leagues from Rennes. He the other day read that part of your letter, where you say, you would have me with you, "Yes, doubtless, I will, I have as much right to you as THE OTHERS. Adieu to THE OTHERS." This appeared to him so pleasant, that he laughed most heartily. How dry THE OTHERS appear; and then immediately ADIEU TO THE OTHERS.

I most ardently wish that M. de Grignan may have got over his disorder. I perceive your uneasiness, which is not trifling, and it is miraculous that your health can sustain it. The marriage between Mademoiselle le Camus, and Madame de Maison's son, appears to me a very proper match: M. d'Arles will be present at these nuptials upon his return from taking the waters.



LETTER DCCXIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, Aug. 28, 1689.

I Have not received your letter, and I shall answer two at once to-morrow; I know not what to do from this interruption; it is a very melancholy thing to happen, when I waited with so much impatience to know about M. de Grignan's illness, which I hope will be attended with no dangerous consequences, yet I cannot help being very uneasy about it: the time appears very long from Friday at noon, to Monday the same hour. I have just received a letter from the Marquis, that wing or foot of you, which gives me pleasure. This pretty little Captain tells me, it is very long, he remembers, since he wrote to me, and he gives me his reasons for not writing so often as he would: he mentions M. de Boufflers's * friendship for him, and imputes it to me, he acquaints me with the news of his camp, their hopes of finishing the campaign by joining some army, a thousand kindnesses to his uncle and aunt; there is an air of maturity in his style, every where blended with so much good sense, that, I say more than ever, like steel and flint, his genius only wants to

* Lewis-Francis, Marquis, since Duke de Boufflers, Peer and Marshal of France.

be struck to produce every desirable spark. His military disposition in so juvenile a state has been already sufficiently evinced; would it ever have been thought that so irksome a trade should suit his taste? He has displayed application, vigilance, emulation, effrontery, in a word, every thing; it should seem to be his destined vocation; he is a charming pretty little fellow, *God preserve him*, for I can never conclude otherwise. But, my dear daughter, God has not preserved this Pope, who was so essential to you, and afforded you so much satisfaction: this county, the good fruits of which you had just begun to taste, is going to disappear. In this I consider nothing but your interest; for I set aside Europe and politics, and I thought if the holy fathers days had been prolonged as much as those of M. d'Arles, it would have been a great blessing: but we are not masters, this we feel every instant, we must bow down to the omnipotent hand. M. de Chaulnes arrived on Sunday the 21st at Versailles, where I learn, he met with a very gracious reception from every body, the King having set the example. I know not whether he has had time to enter upon the affairs of Brittany and the deputation; it was his design, and it is his business, since if my son is appointed it will be seen that he is the master; if not, the contrary will be as plain, and this cannot be a matter of indifference to him: he has always spoke to us quite friendly in this manner, he does not with us shew either the Governor or the Ambassador. We expect news of this deputation, however, with less impatience than that of M. de Grignan's health. Madame de Chaulnes must have arrived yesterday at Paris; and it must have been precisely to-day, or yesterday (Saturday) that

M.

M. de Chaulnes must have set out, this is keeping time very nicely. The King has given this Duke 50,000 livres to defray the expences of his journey, this is very decent, we did not expect so much. Coulanges accompanies him to Rome, he has wrote me a long parting letter, in which he talks a good deal about you. This journey must be agreeable in a fine season. The good Pope died the twelfth, the King has received advice of it; the question now depends upon waiting for the Ambassador and the Cardinals. This seems to me the epocha, which will terminate the Cardinal de Bouillon's misfortunes; but the Cardinal de Camus does not go; whence, daughter, arises this? I am sorry on account of his brothers, whom we love, and who love us. M. de Lavardin holds the States, he would not be displeased to give us this deputation. I know not what Marshal d'Estrées does during the meeting of the States, this is the finest part of his command. Adieu, my most amiable girl, I do not pretend to tell you any news, but I talk about what occurs. M. de la Garde is so well instructed by the Marchioness d'Huxelles*, that you know more than those at Paris. The Marquis d'Huxelles fills a great post at Mentz†. We expect intelligence here of our fleet, it has been a long time at sea.

* Mary de Bailleul, Marchioness d'Huxelles, was mother to Nicholas du Blé, Marquis and afterwards Marshal d'Huxelles.

† The city of Mentz was besieged by Prince Charles of Lorraine. It was invested the thirtieth of May, and the trenches opened the twenty-second of June. The Marquis d'Huxelles commanded in this place, where after making a vigorous defence, he was obliged to capitulate the 8th of September following, for want of powder and muskets.

I know not how I stand at Grignan; I would not play at blind-man's-buff, I know not who I have to do with. Has M. de Carcassonne taken the Chevalier to Balaruc? Is M. de la Garde at home? you will pay my compliments to them all, as you see occasion. I surely embrace M. de Grignan constantly, and with him a perfect state of health. I do not tell you, daughter, all I wish you, I should be bewildered in these different wishes; I am not less terrified than yourself at our long separation; in fine, it is God's will, and our business requires it. My son, his wife, this agreeable house, company sometimes, books, conversation, walks, and Lent at Rennes; all this will come to pass, and at the same time a part of our life; this is disagreeable to those who have lived a long time, but we must have fortitude, and make a merit of the impossibility of doing better.



L E T T E R DCCXX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, August 31, 1689.

YOUR castle, methinks, has the finest air in the world; those two tables served at once in an instant, gives me a high opinion of Flame*, he is at least another Honoré†. Such abi-

* M. de Grignan's steward.

† M. de Chaulnes's steward.

lities greatly solace the mind of the mistress of a house, but such magnificence is very destructive ; a fine and a good air in such a house as your's, must make a capital article of expence. I have just seen it displayed in the stroke of a wand, which makes every thing necessary rise out of the earth, to *Honoré's* great triumph ; I am acquainted with the beauty, and even the necessity, of such *manœuvres*, but I likewise see the consequences, and you also. You make me call to mind the poor Abbé de Pontcarré, in speaking of Champigni ; I think they were related, except in eating ; for the Trojan and the priest now no more, and our Pontcarré, seemed to think of nothing but gluttony. I formerly said of the late M. de Rennes *, that he greased the leaves of his breviary with slices of ham ; your Valence † would not despise this kind of signet ; and indeed his face was a perfect luminary of the church, and as soon as twelve struck, *Monseigneur* laid aside all business. M. de Grignan was pleased to see, in his castle, his old friend Canaples, who is going to the waters of Vals, because he is at Paris ; and M. d'Arles is going to Forges, because he is in the neighbourhood of Vals, so true it is, even to these very fountains, *that no one is a prophet in his own country* ; I tell this to M. d'Arles. I am fond of what you said upon first seeing Larrei, *is it you ?* and his ready answer, *No, Madame, it is not me*, is such a specimen of vivacity as shews him to be his father's own son, for he had a great share of wit somewhat

* Charles-Francis de la Vieuville, Bishop of Rennes, died the 29th of January, 1676.

† William Bochart de Champigni, nominated Bishop of Valence in 1687, and consecrated in November 1693.

gross, but was lively and pleasant. But to return to these good Chaulnes's, I related to you the sequel of the courier's arrival at Hennebon, and that the King was not willing that the affair should as yet be made public, and yet every one at Vannes was complimenting the Duke and Dukes upon it. We made the Duke relate in his coach all the particulars of his former journies to Rome; this would have diverted you. No one is more endued with the spirit of negociation; the *mezzo termine*, he is never in want of. I desired him to make minutes of all that passed, and told him, how proper it was to appoint him for that embassy. We returned to Rennes the fifteenth, and he set out the eighteenth in a chaise, and arrived on Sunday the twenty-first at Versailles; the King sent for him whilst he was covered with dust, and conferred with him for half an hour in his closet. Heaven knows how all the courtiers embraced him, and even M. de Reims; a man that is going to Rome, cannot be any longer indifferent to him. He set out on Saturday the twenty-seventh, and will take the course of the Rhone, so you may see him with a good spying-glass. The Cardinals are to join him at Lyons, there are twenty-eight gallies at Toulon, which are to carry them to Leghorn. Coulanges makes the journey. You have done very right to write to these good governors, I am charmed to think you made much of them, and I thank you; thus it is I repay all their friendship. They wanted to have me with them at all events; Madame de Chaulnes intreated me in such a manner as greatly confused me; but Chaulnes is not like the Rocks, where I regulate many affairs; besides, she will not remain there long, she must necessarily enjoy the pleasure of a most

gracious reception at Versailles. The King and his ministers view with an eye of satisfaction the wife of a man who is negotiating the most important business that can possibly come upon the tapis, who is no longer young, and yet flies to execute his commission as he did twenty-three * years before. A woman makes a good figure upon such occasions as these at Versailles : M. de Chaulnes desired her very strenuously not to absent herself. This good Duchess reached Paris in six days ; she and her horses had like to have perished by the heat ; I find it so intense only in this part of the world ; your north wind qualifies the dog-days. Madame de Chaulnes arrived two days before her husband's departure ; she writes to me extremely friendly ; she will inform me what M. de Chaulnes has done about the deputation : I am persuaded that they are both more anxious about it than I am ; it is their business, which they are sensible of. I will tell you one of these days of a piece of friendship of this Duchess, which will please you. You are a *Genius* that is too good, and too amiable to have wrote to M. de Chaulnes about the deputation. Your brother returns you a thousand thanks, and embraces you as often. This is saying a good deal upon the same subject, I sincerely ask your pardon ; the reason is, that in retirement things of this kind make an impression. We had, nevertheless, a visit on Monday from M. de la Faluire, his wife, daughter, and son ; they supped and lay here, and were pleased with our alleys. I know not what to tell you about our fleet ; we have heard nothing concern-

* There was an interval of twenty-three years between M. de Chaulnes's second embassy to Rome and this third.

ing it, since the succour we sent it, and this armament has been at sea. A man of wit said the other day at Rennes, that he had never seen or heard of a complete victory at sea, since the battle of Actium; and that all battles consist only of some broad-sides, the maiming of ships, which are thought to be sunk, and which appear again in a few weeks; this seemed to be very true. But what say you to the command in Brittany, which should content Marshal d'Estrées, notwithstanding he is deprived of that part relative to the holding the States, which is reserved for M. de Lavardin? This sanction was necessary to the latter, and every one should have his turn. You do not think that M. de Lavardin will be against us, if we obtain the deputation. I understand that the Marshal's lady gives herself very little trouble about these trifles, provided she can be at Marli or Trianon. Adieu, then, my most amiable girl, I am persuaded that you will entertain our good Duke very elegantly upon his return from Rome. I lament the loss of the Pope, I lament that of Avignon. *God gave it, and God has taken it away.* Remember me in the most friendly manner to those about you; I imagine two of the Grignans are at Balaruc. Good heaven, what a translation of Madame de Noailles to Perpignan! how can she be absent from Versailles without being pregnant?

LETTER



L E T T E R DCCXXI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, September 4, 1689.

IT is true that I put on a mysterious air, M. de Chaulnes intrusted us with his secret as a secret; M. de Croissi informed us that he was not yet to mention it; so that I was faithful to my trust even in Provence. I dropt some words however, methinks, which should have made you understand I would tell you more about it the first opportunity. I also told you how we found our mystery quite discovered and circulated at Vannes, and how comic this appeared to us. I acquainted you with M. de Chaulnes's joy; I told you that his wife, who shut her eyes to all the brilliant side of the question, only opened them to the dangers and perils of so long a journey; we exerted ourselves to divert her from this melancholy prospect, and to make her fix her attention upon the beauty and distinction of the choice so properly conferred by the King, and which would create so much jealousy at Versailles. In a word, Revel and I exhausted our rhetoric, and M. de Chaulnes supported us; those who say he hesitated do but little know him, he is a man who cannot do things with a bad grace, or bargain with his master. This is really the answer he made him, I think I
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can tax my memory with it : “ Sire, your Majesty commands, and I obey. I shall set out immediately to wait upon you, and receive your commands, &c.” Such are the objections he made. He set out with great joy, as I have told you, and left all Brittany in great affliction. Madame de Chaulnes departed on the morrow, and arrived in six days at Paris, she has written to me twice, and informs me that if she had not been thus diligent, she would not have seen M. de Chaulnes ; that she was only with him an hour, and that she will send me news about our business. I have done extremely right, my dear child, not to go with her for two reasons ; the first is, that she will be very little at Chaulnes ; and when there, that retreat would not be so natural to me as this is, where I have my son’s company, and where I have two large estates that may oblige me to remain some time in this province ; when you reflect a little, I believe you will find that I am in the right, and that if I had returned, I should have frustrated the intent of my journey into Brittany, by shortening it. As to my son and his wife, they are charmed with my remaining here till Lent. I then propose to go, through complaisance to them, to Rennes, and because the time of Lent is more melancholy in the country than winter ; but as things may change, we must not have so much foresight. What is certain is, that the air here is very good, and you wrong it to think it otherwise. It has been the finest weather in the world for these two months past, hot in the dog-days, a charming month of September, none of your violent north-winds, which make Canaples and your castle tremble. I, nevertheless, hope to tremble there as well as the rest. I know not how our deputation stands ;

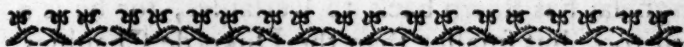
my

my son says that his ill-luck has killed the Pope, to deprive us of M. de Chaulnes ; and though the Duke, upon his retiring from the King's closet, said to M. de Lavardin, who was coming to hold the states, " Sir, I beg that M. de Sévigné may have the deputation ;" the same ill-luck prevails, for M. de Lavardin is not to hold them, but Marshal d'Estrées. M. de Lavardin was charmed with having this commission, and an opportunity of obliging my son ; it is very probable that M. de Chaulnes had apprised the King of it, as he spoke so freely to M. de Lavardin. But the Marshal wrote to his Majesty to complain that he was deprived of the principal function of his command, which was even specified in his commission. The King told M. de Croissi, that his design was not to have included in it the States ; M. de Croissi acknowledged that he had not made any distinction: the King seemed angry, but finding the Marshal was not in the wrong, said that he must then be acquainted that he should hold them, and M. Lavardin be told that he could not ; the latter, like a good courtier, submitted with respect to his master's will. This is what Madame de Lavardin informs me, accompanied with a thousand friendly expressions and regrets, that her son has it not in his power to serve mine. However, Madame de la Fayette has sent me a letter for Marshal d'Estrées, in which she intreats, him with all the force of argument, to give this deputation to my son, of whom she says abundance of kind things ; she adds that her friendship for me makes her take as sensible an interest in this affair as if she pleaded for her own son. I have accompanied this letter with another, and Sévigné also : we shall see what all these engines will produce. Madame de la Fayette

Fayette tells me that Madame de Chaulnes is far from being a-sleep upon this occasion ; so that I imagine if M. de Chaulnes has obtained the King's approbation of his choice in favour of my son, this good Duchess will prevail upon M. de Croissi to write to Marshal d'Estrées, and it will be finished. Here is a long harangue, your friendship exposes you to such terrible details ; I have not had time to shorten it, as a great genius * says ; but as you are willing to know every thing, such is the state of things, and we are more resigned to Providence in these matters, than you can possibly imagine. This is not the case with regard to your loss of Avignon and your fine county ; what an abode ! how sweet to pass the winter there ! what a blessing was this income, which you so properly applied ! what a loss ! what a misreckoning ! I am sorely grieved at it ; my *Genius* often complains to the good Duke of Chaulnes, in proportion as he accommodates matters, and thereby deprives you of Avignon. Nothing is so pleasant as this sudden change of climate, which makes him leap from Aurai to within two leagues of Grignan ; for he is upon your Rhone, and from thence he goes to Rome, and he certainly will not return from that city, without visiting you ; nothing less can console him for the interruption of his intercourse with that amiable *Genius* : nothing more clearly proves that people must meet ; it is your turn now to tell me some news of M. de Chaulnes. I must say a word or two about my dear Paulina ; was I not in the right to foretel that the desire of pleasing you, would make her amiable ? She should not be led roughly, and you find how gentleness operates

* The inimitable author of *Trifling Epistles*.

upon her mind; it gives me a very sensible joy, as well upon her account as your's, who must love this little girl, and who will be a most agreeable companion for you. Adieu, my dear child, I love you for many reasons, but particularly because you love me, this is a very urgent cause, and will not loose its prey.



L E T T E R DCCXXII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, September 7, 1689:

MADAME de la Fayette has wrote again to Marshal d'Estrées, to desire him not to engage himself, telling him these are not mere words of course; that she is more solicitous of obtaining for us what she requests of him, than if it were for her own son; and that every measure was taken at court to crown the business in question with success: she acts according to Madame de Chaulnes's advice this second time. Nothing can equal this good Duchess's friendship for me, nor the pains she takes to give me pleasure; she is a real and vigilant friend. Madame de la Fayette is touched at her behaviour, and unites most cordially her forces; so that I can do nothing but thank these three people. I will acquaint you with the sequel.

I am

I am persuaded that you have had, at least, one letter from M. de Chaulnes, he flies as swift as a bird. His wife had no more trouble than yourself in preparing his equipage. His Majesty gave him 50,000 livres for this purpose : I wish with all my heart you had as much to console you for the death of the Pope. Our fleet is returned quite peaceably to Belleisle, and M. de Seignelai has flown back to Versailles, for he is a bird too, but smaller than the Duke de Chaulnes. You find that our wag was in the right, in saying there were no sea-fights since the battle of Actium. The Marshal d'Humieres should not have endeavoured to take Valcourt at the first onset *; if these gentlemen are not successful, the world is very apt to condemn their conduct. It is said the Marshal's lady gives out that the loss of her friends upon this occasion, prevents her enjoying *his victory*. M. de Boufflers has done a brilliant action †; I believe our Marquis was concerned, and he is very well after it, so that we have nothing to do but thank the Lord. What an emotion I feel, when I hear M. de Boufflers name mentioned ! M. de Revel is here with two pretty ladies from Rennes, one of whom it is said he is in love with : this woman understands raillery, I do not believe she is in earnest with our passing hero : they are, however, joyous, and will stay three or four days with us. I do not love smuggling; but if I had a mind, I believe I could be useful in the conversation. The poor Marchioness de Marbeuf is quite overcome with a violent cold; as to me, my health

* Marshal d'Humieres wanting to force the post of Valcourt, August 27, lost many men, and was obliged to retire.

† The Marquis de Boufflers attacked Kochem upon the Moselle, August 26, and carried it by assault.

is so good, that I am sometimes astonished at it; I have none of the little achs or pains that are so common; methinks I am in this respect too lucky, and I receive it at the hand of Providence in the same manner as I should the contrary, were it decreed. And are you, my child, no longer troubled with those dejections of spirits, head-aches, and pains in your legs? is that handsome pretty machine of your's in perfect order? Madame de Coulanges informs me she has restored her health by means of bathing; she is going back to Brevanes with such a taste for solitude, which even she herself does not comprehend; she complains that you have been the first to break off a correspondence that gave her so much pleasure; nothing can afford her any consolation in this respect, but the hope of your renewing it, when you are together, for she has, with grief, observed that your return will absolutely destroy this correspondence, which always afflicts her; in a word, she is all politeness.

A great event has occurred. The Count de Revel set out this morning at day-break, he remained only one day here. The ladies are astonished, and will now find the time heavy on their hands. He gave my son serious reasons for his precipitancy; he said he was not willing to mortify a certain lady; this made us laugh; women are generally very pleasant, and M. de Rochefoucault is in the secret.

Adieu, my most dear and amiable girl, it is imagined our Parliament will return to Rennes, and doubtless that of Guyenne to Bourdeaux; traffic and barter are always uppermost;
money

money does every thing. I must embrace Paulina, and cannot help rejoicing that she is worthy of your friendship.



L E T T E R DCCXXIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, September 11, 1689.

IF I had been with you the day you wrote to me, or my *Genius* had been at Grignan as *your's* was at Aurai, I would have said to you, "Daughter, you are jesting to think of seeing M. de Chaulnes to-day or to-morrow; he is still at Paris, and will not set out till the twenty-eighth, so that he cannot be with you till the third of September: but my *Genius* does not travel like *your's*, and our good Duke, who knew how to converse with and answer it, would not take the same care of mine. I own, I should have been charmed to think of your seeing him, and it would have been pleasant to have received in his presence letters wrote by me from Brittany when with him in his own house, and where I speak about him; for my letters have for a long time dwelt upon him. In fine, my dear, we shall see what will become of this passage so near you: I cannot help thinking there will be at least some little *Coulanges*, a letter, or a compliment; in a word, some remembrance. The good Duchesse always says; "As to the beautiful Countess, M. de Chaulnes loves her dearly,
he

he esteems her, and is quite at ease when he is with her." We shall see what this will produce : I wish with all my heart, that the care he took about my son, in desiring M. de Lavardin to give him the deputation, may be approved by his Majesty ; for as to Marshal d'Estrées, he certainly will not refuse Madame de la Fayette. Do you not admire that this sudden and surprizing change, should so exactly put us out of our way ? We cannot yet comprehend that the Duke would have spoken in the manner he did to M. de Lavardin, without having said a word to the King ; but this is still a mystery. We have wrote to Madame de la Fayette, that we think it would be very natural for M. de Lavardin to inform his Majesty of what M. de Chaulnes said to him, when he thought M. de Lavardin was to hold the States ; that M. de Revel has approved of this thought, and that we send it to her for improvement. I am persuaded that Madame de Chaulnes will do all in her power ; so that I sleep, and leave all this to be unravelled you know where. I am far more uneasy with respect to our poor Marquis ; the army is every where so much in motion, that we may believe that the flying camp of Boufflers will not remain inactive. They have performed a very brilliant action, whilst Marshal d'Humieres let himself be beat at Valcourt. This young rogue* entered sword in hand, forced the castle, and killed or carried off eleven or twelve hundred men ! Image to yourself this child become a man, nay a soldier, a firebrand ; there would be no sustaining these reflections, if we did not at the same time consider, that God will preserve him ; and that whom he guards

* The Marquis of Grignan,

is well guarded. Indeed, you are in the right to say, I am not indifferent about this child, or your business ; I do not only interest myself or take my share, but I am over head and ears in it ; and how can it be otherwise ? This is what occupies me and sets me in motion, it makes me sensible that I am still too much alive.

Corbinelli has been quite kneaded in mystery upwards of a twelvemonth ; I am in the secret ; all the outworks of the place are so invested, that he can suffer no other reading. He has got a Malaval * that charms him ; he has found out that my grandmother, and that the love of God of our *grandfather* St. Francis of Sales, were as spiritual as St. Theresa. He has extracted from all these books five hundred maxims perfectly beautiful ; he every day visits Madame le Maigre, who is a very pretty woman, nothing is spoken of but God, Christian morality, the Evangelist of the day ; these are called holy conversations, they charm him, and he shines in them ; he is insensible to every thing else. He nevertheless answers M. de Soissons † a little in behalf of M. Descartes : he shews all he does to Madame de Coulanges, who is very well pleased at it : several Cartesians desire him to continue, but you know he will not, for he burns every thing that he scribbles ; always full of others and destitute of himself, his self-love

* Francis Malaval, author of several works added to the *Index* at Rome, as suspected of being too spiritually refined. Malaval's article is very curious in Moreri's historical Dictionary. Who would believe that a man who was blind from nine months old, should attain so much erudition and knowledge as is ascribed to him ?

† Peter-Daniel Huet, Bishop of Soissons, and afterwards of Avranches, wrote against Descartes's Philosophy.

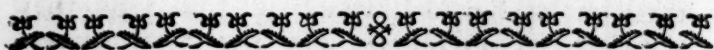
is their pride's intimate friend, and he does not offend them; I am not surprized that the Lieutenant-Civil is not displeased with him. I know not whether he had the bringing about that marriage*, but it is broke off; her mother is inconsolable, her father does not care about it, he says, and the daughter shews great indifference in so critical a situation. Corbinelli does not write to me, he has no time; I know not what I would not give to see the body of the place as well taken, as the outworks, and see how real devotion would operate upon so lively and extensive an understanding; if I were worthy of asking such a favour of God, I would do it with all my heart.

You talk to me about M. de Beauvillier, and M. de Fenelon, and of the propriety of these choices; as I have already told you, they are divine. I thereupon pay my most sincere compliments to the Chevalier; M. de Beauvillier is very worthy of being his friend.

I acquainted you with the negotiations that were carrying on for the return of the parliament. My son is gone to make a tour to Rennes, to visit M. de Pommereuil's son, who is arrived at Alençon, of which place he is Intendant; he has got his handsome wife with him, she would set all Rennes in a blaze, were she to remain here four days. Our ladies are still here three days after the faithless and perfidious departure of M. de Revel; this was really a subject that

† The marriage of Madame le Camus with M. de Soissons, which did not take place. She married in 1690, M. de Nicolas, first President of the Chamber of Accounts at Paris.

afforded no pleasure, though they pretend to be quite easy about it. The weather to-day is most dreadful, it should seem that winter were already disposed to take place. I have some thoughts of drying myself by your fine sun at Avignon. Ah! my God, let us not talk of this; it is the Duke that will deprive you of this beautiful county, he deserves being well scolded; I dare not think of the revenue you derived from it, nor what you will do without this resource. Preserve yourself, my dear child, let me hope to see you again in good health; mine continues always very well; my daughter-in-law desires to be remembered to you in the kindest manner; we were alone, we took courage, and we are very well able to bear my son's absence.



L E T T E R DCCXXIV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, September 14, 1689.

I Am always unhappy, when any of your letters do not come directly to hand; this makes me lose the thread of a conversation that was perfectly connected, and which gives me joy and pleasure. When one belongs to a society, as I do to that of Grignan, one shares its interest, and it commands one's attention; and therefore the miscarriage of a letter is no trifling matter; but what is to be done in this case? arm ourselves with

with patience, and endure these lesser evils that are united to greater; endeavour, if it pleases God, to see one another again, and not take such violent steps as little Rochebonne * ; *we must leave one another, and never love one another again* : this is a little violent chap, who cannot bear any thing. As to me, I shall say, *we should always love one another, though we should be obliged to part*. I am fond of the idea you have given me of that pretty child. But let us speak of our good Duke of Chaulnes, he has then called at Grignan; your castle has such a fine air, your chapter is so noble, your terraces so proud and so superior to all others in the world, that the Duke will easily comprehend that Boreas is not always in a humour to suffer such elevated structures, which seem to brave and defy him. You must inform me what passed at this visit; I am convinced that you must have had Coulanges and the disguised Capuchin †. I wish the latter could cure the gripes. How, my daughter, is this? M. de Grignan, who never was afflicted with this complaint, to be thus disordered with it! but we have no choice, and must submit. God has not yet pointed out to me the path of my decay, I wait for it with a resignation that will make me endure it patiently; for the one seldom comes without the other. I am persuaded you have received the Duke in the most courteous and friendly manner, notwithstanding the ill office he is going to do you. I do not think that he amused himself with answering *my Genius*, in the manner he conferred with

* M. de Chateaufneuf de Rochebonne, nephew to M. de Grignan, killed September 11, 1709, at the battle of Malplaquet.

† The physician M. de Chaulnes took with him, and one of the two Capuchins of the Louvre, whom Madame de Sévigné hath often mentioned in her letters.

your's in Lower Brittany ; he must have had too much joy and business in conversing with you personally ; this, in my opinion, is the most desirable part of his embassy. You must have mentioned your poor mama, and he must have explained to you what he has done for our deputation ; what must astonish you is, that we know nothing about the matter ; after having learnt what he said to M. de Lavardin to desire him to give the deputation to M. de Sévigné, such a silence has taken place, as I do not comprehend. But as it is this Duke's business to name the deputy, I have no reason yet to doubt of his good-will, and still less of the friendly zeal of Madame Chaulnes ; nay, indeed, I have reason to be convinced of it. The Parliament is sent back to Rennes * ; this gives incredible joy ; this city furnishes the King with 50,000 livres. M. de Coetlogon † has been canvassing in this affair, and I am persuaded that it is him who has thrown the stumbling-blocks in our way through M. de Cavoie : I have nothing to say, and therefore say nothing, unless it be that we are not lucky, by the death of a Pope, at a stated period ; Marshal d'Estrées complains, which hindered M. de Lavardin from holding the States, as he otherwise would have done ; the return of the Parliament at this juncture, and a present of 50,000 livres ; this succession and concatenation of unforeseen events, have just produced what you judge as well as myself. But, my dear child, do not be more mortified than we are, we have still

* The Parliament of Rennes had been moved to Vannes in 1675, on account of a sedition that happened that year at Rennes.

† René-Hyacinth, Marquis de Coetlogon, was governor of Rennes, and brother-in-law to Lewis d'Oger, Marquis de Cavoie, Grand Marshal of the King's household.

some fortitude remaining, these things should not find access to the sensible parts of the heart. Marshal d'Estrees tells me he refers me to Madame de la Fayette, with regard to his sentiments; we shall at length know the sequel, and the curious unravelling of all this intrigue. My son consoles himself with the resolution he has taken of not raising the *arriere-ban*, which has been given him, to indemnify him for the expence he made at the head of the Nobility. I have already gone too far, I admire the swiftness of my pen, and which exceeds the prescribed limits. According to the idea I have of Paulina's person and sense, I think she must be very striking and agreeable, and a thousand times more so than those beauties who have not these attractions. I also imagine that the Duke considered her as she is, and you, my child, as you are; I am not uneasy about your beauty, so long as you preserve your health. I informed Madame de la Fayette that her son should shudder at the thoughts of marrying Madame de Marillac, whom our Marquis is enamoured with: this marriage is much approved, they are a very good family, and the alliance is estimable, and all the Lamoignons have 200,000 livres and board for ever. Madame de la Fayette insures all her estate, retaining only the use and profits; is not this enough? she is very well satisfied; the marriage will not take place till the end of the campaign.

M. d'Arles has written to me an amorous letter, he is well pleased with Forges; he informs me that Madame de Vins has gained her suit, and I have wrote to him to congratulate her thereupon. My son desires his kindest love to you, and he relates all that I told you; he saw at Rennes

the beautiful daughter-in-law of M. de Pomme-reuil ; she stammers so much that she cannot utter a sentence distinctly ; but we must say with Moliere, where is the foolish husband who would not wish his wife to be dumb* ? Really I neither stammer nor am dumb ; this is a rage, but I must tell you once more, I am very sorry your farmers begin to pay you as badly as ours ; this joined to the loss of the county——*but let us not talk of that*, any more than the ravages of time upon our poor persons, and at length our lives. I should end more joyously, but know not what to say, *dixi*.

* See Act II. Scene IV. of the Mock-Doctor.



L E T T E R DCCXXV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, September 18, 1689.

YOUR letter of the first of September is at length come to hand, after having travelled to Rennes ; this journey my letters sometimes take, by their being put into the wrong bag, and how is this to be redressed ? but here it is, I should have been very sorry to have lost it, it carries on a chain of conversation, which informs me of every thing that had escaped me. Give me speedily an account of the good Duke de Chaulnes's visit, of the magnificent and most friendly reception

tion you gave him ; your house had doubtless a great air, with good cheer, two tables covered, as at his in Brittany, elegantly served, much company, without Boreas's interfering ; he would have stunned you, there would have been no hearing each other, and besides you had guests enough without him. Methinks that Flame knows perfectly well his business, without confusion, and in great taste : I picture to myself all this with so much pleasure, as I cannot possibly make you sensible of. I wished that you might be seen in all your glory, at least your rural glory, for that of Aix is still greater ; and that he should find something else to eat than our pullet, and bacon-omelet. I am now sensible of what you are capable ; you have laid by enough to do what you like at Paris ; he has seen your *meagre* and other eating, the mutton-pasty, and the pigeon-pye. Coulanges played his part also very well, his spirits are not yet lowered, I dread this change in him ; for gaiety constitutes great part of his merit. I imagine his heart overflowed with joy, to meet with such a handsome reception, in which he took an interest, and was transported with Paulina's perfections. You always accuse her with not behaving well but before Dukes and Peers ; I have, nevertheless, seen her very agreeable only with us ; and you gave an account, five years since, of her very diverting behaviour at table. M. de Chaulnes has wrote to me, here is his letters, you will find whether he is perfectly contented with you all, and the manner in which you do the honours of your castle. He made you laugh with the *Genius*, mine did not appear at Grignan, more agreeable entertainment is there to be found ; you knew pretty

nearly what he had a mind to say, and you have done much honour to my memory; you have mentioned me several times, and you drank my health. Coulanges clambered upon his chair, this I think is a dangerous expedient for a little man, as round as a bowl, and very unhandy; I am very glad he trembled in solemnizing my health; and am very anxious for one of his letters. The dinner, which you ordered to rise at la Flame's wand, *Noah's ark*, which you paint very agreeably, must have been both elegant and enchanting. The music was quite new; it might have made me recall to mind the menagerie at Versailles. In fine, you are very generous, as you say, to give so genteel a reception to an Ambassador, who is going to do you so much harm; I am convinced that he is very sorry for it. Madame de Chaulnes informs me that it is thought many difficulties will be started in the Conclave, and afterwards upon that cruel affair the *franchises*; and I say so much the better,

Rome sera, du moins, un peu plus tard rendue.

Rome will, at least, surrender somewhat later.

That county, that charming Avignon, will remain with us, whilst the *Holy Ghost* is choosing a Pope, and the negotiations continue. You are very right, daughter, it is like the day you were at the ball at the Louvre, so brilliant with jewels, and you were to restore them on the morrow: but what you retained was better, and you were handsomer the next day; but your income will not be so, according to all appearances. I hereupon say, as you do, in your funeral orations, *let us not mention it.*

it. Indeed, this did not appear at Grignan, when you received his Excellency ; I know not how this is done, or how people can run without legs ; it is a miracle, which I pray God may ever continue. The Duchefs de Chaulnes sent me the letter you wrote ; no one can say all that is precisely necessary so well as yourself, every thought seems placed in its proper nich, and could not be fixed any where else so well. In a word, what shall I say to you ? I share in all you have so perfectly executed ; self-love, friendship, and gratitude, are all satisfied. I imagine your brothers did not set out till they had assisted you in doing the honours of your house. I shall say nothing to you about the deputation, every thing relative to it, has been too slow and too long in hand ; we will talk of it another time.

Your dear son is very well, you know that he was every where sword in hand, with M. Boufflers ; this little rogue, my dear, *God preserve him*, I shall never alter this prayer. Mentz has surrendered, this news has surpris'd us ; they were so easy about this siege, that I always laugh'd at M. de Lorraine. It is said that the Marquis d'Huxelles has retired with the esteem of both friends and foes. I tremble lest the Dean's brother should be among the number of dead or wounded ; all his brave brothers will not attain grey hairs ; this he is convinced of, if we may judge by the hasty careless manner with which he list'n'd to M. Prat ; he is accustomed to such news. I am in pain about poor Martillac, what can be done in a city taken by

assault, without a leg*? what noise, what confusion, what an infernal region! I am very uneasy. I pity M. de la Trouffe, we said very right, in seeing him adjust his Trufs (Trouffe); the worst that can happen to him, is to enjoy the expence he makes us: this was both just and true. You want to know what sort of a life we lead, my dear child; I will describe it to you; we rise at eight, go to mass at nine, we walk or not, according to the weather, sometimes different ways; we work after dinner, my daughter-in-law upon a hundred different things. I upon two pieces of tapestry, which Madame de Carman gave me at Chaulnes; at five we separate, and walk alone or in company, and we meet at every pretty spot, with a book, pray or think of my dear daughter; we build castles in the air, and are sometimes gay and sometimes melancholy. My son reads agreeable and good books, we have got some upon devotion, and some upon history, this amuses and employs us, we make our remarks upon what we read; my son is indefatigable, he would read five hours together, if we would let him. We receive letters and answer them, which takes up no small space of our life, at least of mine. We have had company, and we shall have more, though we do not wish for them; when they come, we are very easy. My son has workmen who are cutting the trees of the great alleys, and laying sand in the parterre. In fine, my daughter it is a strange thing, that in pursuing

* Madame de Sévigné was not ignorant that Mentz had capitulated, and that Prince Charles of Lorraine had given M. d'Huxelles a *carte blanche*: but she meant to speak of the attack of the covered way, which was very vigorous and bloody.

this

this insipid, and in some measure, melancholy life, the days should glide and fly from us, and God knows what flies from us at the same time ; but no more of that, though I cannot help thinking of it. We sup at eight, Sévigné reads after supper, but then only books of amusement for fear of falling asleep ; they retire at ten, but I seldom go to-bed till about twelve ; such are nearly the rules of our convent ; over the door is inscribed *holy liberty, or, do as you please*. I prefer this life far beyond that of Rennes, it will be sufficient to go and pass Lent there, for the nourishment of the soul and body.

Du Plessis has wrote to me, that his chimera has as yet only displayed the end of its nose, but is not yet come forth ; but that he is married to a person quite perfect and agreeable to his taste, who has sense and beauty, of a good family, and who has secured him from all future want ; this is what you make me question ; he seems still, however, to listen to Madame de Vins. In fine, these are his words, *I love this woman better than the deceased* ; this agrees with the grief he displayed at her loss, do you recollect ?



L E T T E R DCCXXVI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, September 21, 1689.

I Do not only read your letters with pleasure, but I read them again with an affection that engages me, and gives a relish to my solitary walks ; these letters have more charms, and are better written than you imagine ; you are not sensible of the turn and harmony there are in them. I must tell you, my dear Countess, that M. de Chaulnes, after so many professions of friendship, has forgot us a little at Paris. He received your letter at Versailles, and it was very proper to awaken his attention ; nevertheless, in eight days residence, and three conferences with the King, he did not find one moment to say a word in favour of my son, not even to M. de Croissi ; he was contented with telling M. de Lavardin, who was to have had the states ; “ Sir, I intreat you to appoint M. de Sévigné deputy.” And the next day, upon Marshal d’Estrée’s remonstrances, an alteration took place ; so that these words were nothing more than wind. Madame de Chaulnes is to speak about it to M. de Croissi, but it will certainly be too late ; they are people who do not sleep, and you see our situation. If this business depended upon Marshal d’Estrées, it would be very certain : Madame de la Fayette has wrote to him

him two letters with surprizing energy ; he only requires that at this moment of the *interregnum*, he might discover what would be agreeable at court, and he himself points out the way to Madame de la Fayette, who on her part pushes the Duchess, and places the Abbé Tetu between her and M. de Croissi ; she certainly does wonders, and we wait the effect of all her cares tolerably easy, considering the object, but hurt with the coolness and silence of the Duke, whose friendship for me and my son, whose views, advice, manner, all persuaded us, and the whole province, that he considered us with peculiar distinction. This, between you and me, so greatly afflicts and surprises us, that by comparing all that has past since their departure, with what passed before, we can no way account for this horrid difference, and we think it all a dream, but of the number of those disagreeable dreams that we are very glad to wake from, and discover the illusion. We shall acquaint you with the sequel ; but be assured that we cannot be more satisfied with the Marshal ; he has even written to us, without opening himself to Madame de la Fayette, in the most obliging manner in the world. As to M. de Lavardin, it must be owned that the holding the States would have been a very pretty appointment for him ; but this was taking the finest feather out of the Marshal's cap : his Majesty may easily compensate this to M. de Lavardin when he pleases. What say you to Mentz ? the Marquis d'Huxelles was in want of powder and muskets ; it seems to us likewise that the succours were somewhat tardy ; in fine, it was God's will, as it is that your son should be in perfect health. This poor Marquis has wrote me a very pretty letter ; he rallies with me, and calls my daughter-in-law his cousin, he says they have
done

nothing yet, but highly praises M. de Boufflers ; in a word, no one can answer better the summonses of courage and valour than he does, *God preserve him*. Coulanges appears to me transported with your magnificence, and good cheer, with your taste, and with Paulina ; you are wicked, you think it is forced by the virtue of exorcism, but I believe him ; but without being Dukes, you display more splendor than is necessary to transport him ; your company was perfectly good, and your court very decent, nothing could add to so good and grand a reception. This M. Rousseau is mad about Madame de la Riviere, whom he raises as a luminary to heaven, these are their reveries ordinary and extraordinary, to which they do so much honour that they have almost been confused with them ; for they took for very serious truths, all that their imagination chose to figure. As to me, I am not dreaming when I tell you that one of my letters is either lost or miscarried ; I did not wait from the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth to write to my dear girl ; I wrote to you from hence, where I arrived with Madame de Chaulnes and M. de Revel ; she set out on Saturday the twentieth, at four in the morning, and I wrote to you the next day, August twenty-first ; it is only to scold the postman, that I am so exact ; I do not, however, complain, as I receive your letters very regularly. You praise Revel for the same reason as I did, in saying that I had found him a man of veracity, and so little tinged with vanity, that after having related the passages of the Rhine and Senef, and other circumstances of his campaigns, I did not know whether he was praise-worthy or censurable. He told us that he at first fell into the Rhine, and was dragged out by his head of hair, that his

horse

horse sunk into a hole; in fine, he related all this in such a manner, that one might have concluded he was drowned; nevertheless, it seems he arose very quickly, quite wet, upon another horse, and went very prettily to charge the enemy, and disengage the Prince, who had just been wounded *. I was, nevertheless, in great want of this arret of council from above, which the Chevalier sends me, for it is really one to me. I am compelled to say, to complete Revel's praise, that he did not speak in this careless manner of the battle of Altenheim †, and of the Chevalier's reputation.

Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

I had, nevertheless, assured my mother that no one could be more esteemed for valour and even probity than Revel; but this was only a trifling *sentence*, from an inferior judge, in comparison of the arret of council, which has just been delivered by the *glorious* knight. Since we are upon the chapter of Revel, I will give you a little anecdote, which will appear quite *fuor di proposito*. I once saw Madame le R. ‡ at Madame de Louvois's playing at bassette, when she lost considerably; at length, highly piqued at her ill luck, she made a great *Alpion* §, saying, "if I lose this alpion, I will say the most infamous thing of myself that can possibly be uttered." She lost it, and to keep her word, she told the company that she

* Count de Revel commanded the cuirassiers at the passage of the Rhine, June 12, 1672.

† The Chevalier Grignan had greatly distinguished himself at the battle of Altenheim, which happened August 2, 1675.

‡ A former wife of M. Revel's.

§ A term at basset, synonymous to *paroli* at Pharaoh.

had that very morning taken a clyster through avarice, not being willing to be at an unnecessary expence. This is the anecdote: now, my dear little sister, for the application; I am piqued I have lost the deputation, which I was made to expect, whether I would or not; and, in revenge, I am going to tell you an infamous thing of myself, worse than Madame de la R's. It is this, notwithstanding all my fine reflections, and that philosophy which solitude and retirement inspire, I found myself so much nettled at M. de Chaulnes's neglect and indolence, at the disgust this creates in the province, and the joy with which it has inspired M. de Chaulnes's enemies, and those who hate me on his account, that it is the greatest difficulty in the world I have as yet got the better of it. I have therefore carefully avoided every thing that could recall my thoughts to it, and as your letters were filled with the most friendly sentiments towards me, and the interest you took in that trifling distinction, I would rather have suffered death than read them, they were poison to my mind. Can I, my dear little sister, testify to you a greater share of confidence than relating to you such meanness of sentiment, after six years reasoning and possessing its fruit, good sense? but tell me, at the same time, is there any thing to be compared to the warmth of friendship and sincerity, testified by M. de Chaulnes for two years, to do us this service, and the uncommon lethargy he displays at present, and the profound silence he observes, after so many solemn asseverations, that the only pleasure he had in leaving Brittany, was his going to consummate this affair. How could he approach you after this? how could he write to my mother? in a word, how can he justify himself for having
failed

failed in one of the most essential duties of friendship? could it ever have been thought that M. and Madame de Chaulnes would have become useless to us with regard to the deputation of Brittany, and that Madame de la Fayette and Marshal d'Estrees should be the only persons that would have procured it to us, had measures been taken in time? I begin to lay aside all thoughts of it; and now that I am intirely divested of hopes, I find myself like the man of Dijon, whose story M. de Ormesson has often related to us: when he was upon the wheel, he said to his confessor; "Sir, my mind has not for a long while been so composed." It is certain that I am in a state of greater tranquillity than I was a month ago, when I expected every post M. de Chaulnes's letters; my mother will acquaint you with my sentiments upon this head. I am persuaded that love alone has played us this game; and this is the only apology that can be offered for such conduct, for who does not know that every thing should yield to the power of love? it is only to be lamented that we may attribute it to that little fretful sneerer du B.D.L.R. I am already convinced we are in future to meet with more consolation than at the Rocks, I mean with you and M. de Grignan in your magnificent castle; if God preserves the health of all the Grignans, and if nothing change upon this score in the family of Madame de Mauron, I foresee that nothing can prevent my visiting you at Grignan, under pretence of going to take the waters, but in fact to avoid thereby an *arriere-ban*, which cannot otherwise be dispensed with this year, by reason of the manner in which it was offered me, and because M. de Chaulnes advised me to accept of it, on account of the views he assured me he had for me. This journey

ney I shall take towards spring or rather summer, when in all human probability I shall see you, my dearest sister. My only apprehension is, that M. de Grignan will at that time be obliged, at times, to visit the sea-coasts, and that I shall not have so much of his company as I could desire. I am charmed to think Paulina begins to make conquests; little Coulanges seems to praise her most heartily and most sincerely. Your son informs me very prettily, that after having been at the taking three or four cities, he has a great mind to come and expose himself to the air of the Rocks. Adieu, my most lovely little sister, I salute and embrace all the illustrious Grignans, without forgetting M. de la Garde.

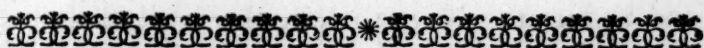
Madame DE SE'VIGNE' continues.

All this must be discharged, it affords some solace. You may very well think that if I see him set out for Bourbon and Grignan, I shall request of him a place in his coach. It will at length be found, that I, who do not keep a philosopher's shop, have more of the merchandize than all of them. Providence assists me wonderfully upon these occasions; it was by submitting to these mandates, that Mademoiselle le Camus heroically underwent the rupture of her marriage; I am much inclined to think, that the Cardinal de Camus* did not bear the shock with so much fortitude. His eminence seeks only the road to paradise, he minds not how many of the *christian*

* This relates to a prelate who piqued himself much upon his high birth, and who preaching one day to the people of his diocese, treated them as a *christian mob*.

mob get in with him. I can never believe that people of real good sense, chuse to carry on the farce too long, it is *outréying* the part. I feel the chagrin of this family *. It is constantly believed that the affair of the Parliament of Rennes is determined.

* Madame de Sévigné was very intimate with all the Cardinal's brothers.



L E T T E R DCCXXVII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, September 25, 1689.

THE restraint laid upon me by M. de Grignan, does not very well agree with me ; he is continually attending to my actions, he is afraid lest I should give him a father-in-law : this captivity will induce me to make an *escapade*, but it will not be with *Monsieur* le Count de Revel, yes, *Monsieur*, for he is not only *Monsieur*, but *Monsieur* le Count de Revel ; we are here quite unacquainted with the custom of giving a title to a person who has no right to it † ; we nevertheless sometimes forget ourselves, and call him simple *Revel*, but this is under the rose. I will not marry him, and so you may make yourself easy, he is too gallant ; this will excite your curiosity to know who are his mistresses, you name two who

† M. de Coulanges said that the children of the members of the parliament of Rennes were all born Marquis's and Counts,
are

are quite females of Brittany, but there are three others; a young lady daughter to a *seneschal* who was here, but is not related to her you have seen: it is Mademoiselle de K—, who is very pretty, and who was at Rennes; he seems, however, to pay more attention to little Madame de la M. C. *your niece*, for she is grand-daughter to *your father* Descartes; she has a great deal of wit, and seems to think that the fire is hot, and that she may burn and be burnt. Nevertheless, this is all transacted with so much decency, that their common lover seems mortally tired with Rennes; he, the other day, told M. de Louvois, that if he wanted for a winter campaign the most steady officer in the world, he would think of him. Let us now, my daughter, consider the Chevalier's prejudice; does friendship so far blind us? I think I am acquainted with it, but it should seem to me that it would never err against conviction; we do not love those less who are in the wrong, but we perceive their mistake. What shall a certain *incognita*, called reason supported by truth, rap at the gate, and shall she be driven away, as from the university of Paris (you have seen that charming work of Despreaux *) without being heard, though accompanied by justification! what do not two and two any longer make four! a gratification given by Marshal de Meillaraie, of a hundred crowns every two years, which was never a settled pension, and which was unknown, cannot be discontinued without a crime; for they say, "Sir, we must see at the meeting of the next States; if I am deceived,

* See the burlesque arret, given in the high chamber of Parnassus, in favour of the masters of arts; for the support of Aristotle's doctrine, &c. See Boileau's *Despreaux works*, Vol. ii. p. 209. Amsterdam Edit. fol. 1718.

it will be easily rectified." For as to the erased death of the States of 71, Coetlogon does not disagree to it. Can one be in the wrong, when all these things are so clearly proved? If the Chevalier had so good a cause in hand with that warm blood that creates heroes and the gout, he would know how to support it in a manner different to what I can. But can a person with so much good sense, shut his eyes and fence up his judgment to this piteous truth? No surely, my dear Countess, no surely the Duke de Chaulnes was not to blame upon this score, this is his master-piece of friendship, here he fulfilled all its duties, and even went beyond them; it is with regard to us that he was wrong, and his behaviour is entirely incomprehensible: such is the miserable state of man; all are Janus-faced, all pretend to veracity, and such is the world. This good Duke has wrote to me again from Toulon, he is incessantly thinking of me, without having once thought of me for a single moment during eight days stay at Paris; not one word was hinted to the King about the deputation so often promised, in so friendly a manner, and which there was so much reason to think would be accomplished; not a word to M. de Croissi, whose son he took with him, and who would have appointed your brother; he says a flying word to M. de Lavardin, but could he think he had more power than himself to create a deputy? we were persuaded that this was after he had mentioned it to the King. At length he sets out, he learns that Lavardin is not to hold the States, it was therefore necessary to write. He goes to Grignan, you speak to him about it, he seems to be inclined to write, but this does not come to an upshot; he writes to me from Grignan and Toulon,

lon, but does not say a word about it. Madame de Chaulnes is to speak to M. de Croissi about it, but this will be too late, the place will be taken by M. de Coetlogon. As to Marshal d'Estrées, he has engaged himself only to Madame de la Fayette, with sensible joy, provided the court leaves him master of the nomination: we were but too well on this side; but we think no more about it, M. de Cavoie will have the deputation for his brother-in-law, and will be in the right. The good Duchess has lost too much time, she is timid, and will find the passage blocked up; every one does not know how to speak. I cannot tell you that I can reconcile this lethargic conduct with an undoubted friendship; for indeed I do not comprehend it any more than my son; but we are resolved to have the glory of not complaining, this would give the Duke's enemies too much pleasure, and serve them for a triumph. We are inclosed in these woods, and it is easy for us to be quiet; changes may take place another year, so that we are very well pleased you gave him such a magnificent reception; we shall not ourselves discontinue our correspondence; I shall only relate the fact, and ask *his excellency* how he could incessantly think of us, and yet forget both us and himself? We shall not go at all to the meeting of the States, and we laugh at the *arriere-ban*, which is only fit to make us uneasy. These are our wise resolutions; if you approve of them, we shall think them still better. We are, nevertheless, very sensible of the loss you are going to sustain of your charming county; we cannot too much regret so many fine and good things that flowed from it. I feel this blow as much as you, and, perhaps, more; for you are sublime, and I

am

am not. A propos of sublime, methinks M. de Marillac * does not act amiss. La Fayette is handsome, and has no bad qualities, he has a good name, he is in the warlike path, and has all his mother's friends, whose number is infinite; his mother is a woman of distinguished merit, she entails all her estate upon him, as does also the Abbé †. He will one day be possessed of 30,000 livres a year, he does not owe a single pistole, these are not mere words of course. Who is there preferable, when the law is out of the question? the lady has 200,000 livres, besides her table; could Madame de la Fayette expect less? tell me your opinion, for I say nothing but the truth. M. de Lamoignon is the depository of the articles, which were signed four days ago, between M. de Lamoignon, Lieutenant-Civil, and Madame de Lavardin, who made the match.

But what say you to all these motions in the magistracy? I am quite unhappy that our M. de Lamoignon should not have been among them; both he and his friends are affected at it. Your M. de Torci ‡ was certainly born dressed, would you had made him write with good ink! but it was not designed that we should avail

* Rene de Marillac, Dean of the Counsellors of State, married Maria-Magdalen de Marillac, his daughter, to Rene-Armand Motier, Count de la Fayette, younger son to Magdalen Pioche de la Vergne, Countess de la Fayette, and Colonel of the regiment de la Fere.

† Lewis Motier, Abbé de la Fayette, eldest son to Madame de la Fayette.

‡ John-Baptist Colbert, Marquis de Torci, appointed secretary of state upon the death of Charles Colbert, Marquis de Torci, his father.

ourselves

ourselves of the ardour of friendship; it was not God's will, this is plain, and we think no more about it. M. de Pontchartrain is appointed Comptroller-general; this was expected, but not so soon; we are going to write to him, you will not fail doing the same, as well as to Madame de Mouci; she is now sister to the first President*, but she will not exult upon it.

How happy Paulina is to be with you! you will new-model her; it is a good sign when she approves of the praises you bestow on Madame de Dangeau. This little girl is quite capable and worthy of all that you are willing to teach her; I have always thought so since you told me she had sense, and was desirous of pleasing you. Once more I say, how happy she is to be with you, and to see and hear you! Coulanges seems charmed with her, as well as with you and M. de Grignan, and your castle, and magnificence; your manner of doing the honour of the house seems to have made every deep impression upon his brain; he will, at last, acknowledge you for Duke and Duchess of *Campo basso*. In a word, my dear Countess, what can you not do, when you have a mind, and with what an air and a grace? My son has read, with pleasure, your intelligence; he has lately wrote to you his thoughts; he desires you will be convinced I am in perfect health, and the air of the Rocks is excellent. M. d'Aix has scarce acted decently not to come and see you; what madness to desire being first

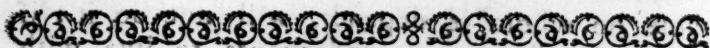
* Achilles de Harlai

President

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 73

President * ! but the truth is he is mad; luckily those on whom it depends, will not do it : if notwithstanding your endeavours to live with him upon good terms, his conduct should displease you, I advise you to write to Madame de la Fayette; she is not convinced that he can be in the right when he opposes you, and there are few things he dreads more than to appear extravagant in her eyes. I am sensible of the contempt in which your Parliament is held, in leaving them such a leader as we are acquainted with; attend a little to what has been the fate of those who have been allotted that province, M. d'Argouges, Pontchartrain, Boucherat, these are men, and not *sea-borses*, who neigh and commit a thousand extravagancies. I shall also name la Falure, whom all the world is completely satisfied with. Adieu, my child, I embrace you with infinite tenderness.

* Of the Parliament of Aix,



L E T T E R DCCXXVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, September 28, 1689.

YOU astonish me, in telling me of the kind of illness with which M. de la Trouffe is afflicted. I was informed a kind of palsy had seized him from the hips downwards ; this is a shocking circumstance, and estranges him from all company, which must make him inconsolable. I do not comprehend how this malady can be cured by the waters of Bourbon ; how can it be imagined that waters which are only cathartic, should be fit to restore strength and vigour to relaxed and intensitive parts ? In a word, my daughter, this is one of the most extraordinary illnesses : I pity M. de la Trouffe, more than he would pity me. I hope that the Chevalier will find as much benefit from the waters as he is made to expect. They must surely have great efficacy, that people should repair from one end of the world to the other, to bathe an hour and a half in three days, the sole remedy, for they are not drunk. Inform me of their effect, and particularly whether the Chevalier has been eased by them. This journey must not be of a great length, if they only bathe three days ; if after this, the Chevalier should be capable of serving, you would all have great reason to wish the campaign in Dauphiny fell to his lot, as your fine castle would then be a quiet easy retreat for

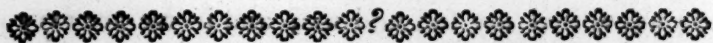
for him. Inclosed is a letter from Coulanges, wherein you will find he is always very full of your magnificent reception and Paulina. Madame de Chaulnes informs me that she has spoken to M. de Croissi, who will do his best, and that a letter shall be sent from the Duke de Chaulnes to M. de Pommereuil ; all this hangs so badly together, that I have no further hopes of it. M. de Pommereuil and the Marshal d'Estrées are entirely devoted to us ; the last wishes only for a hint to name my son : this is what M. de Chaulnes should do, or Madame de Chaulnes after her husband's departure ; this is what he should have wrote after he had learned at Lyons that M. de Lavardin was not to hold the States. In a word, I shall never comprehend this lethargy, after their long continued friendship, they having told us a hundred times, *this is more our business than your's*. As for my part, I imagine they did not chuse to oppose M. de Coetlogon, to whose assiduity the return of the Parliament is attributed, and the present given by the city of Rennes, though in fact he had no hand in it, as it is the effect of their own good-will ; but as he is governor of Rennes, he puts on an importunate air, and they were a good deal embarrassed to acquaint me with this disagreeable circumstance ; but why then should they recommend my son to M. de Lavardin ? this is what I can no way comprehend, and will puzzle my imagination no more about, though I cannot, however, believe, they have no longer any regard for me ; it is to be ascribed rather to timidity than indifference, and I find that this good Duchess is overwhelmed with vapours. Did I not inform you that her husband wrote to me from Toulon ? I shall answer him at Rome, when I shall be more

certain of what I have to acquaint him with : but I will not complain of them, this would be acting a bad part ; every thing is in confusion, and concealed under the voyage to Rome ; we are not sensible of any kind of humiliation with respect to the public, and my heart justifies them, not doubting but they will love us better than M. de Coetlogon.

There is here an Abbé of Francheville, who has a great deal of wit, and is agreeable, natural, and learned, without ostentation ; Montreuil is acquainted with him. He has passed his life at Paris, he has seen you twice, and you have made an impression on his memory, like a divinity ; he is a great Cartesian, and is Mademoiselle Descartes master ; she shewed him your letter ; he admired it and your enlightened understanding ; his wit pleases and diverts me infinitely ; it is a long time since I have been in such good company. He calls my son *nate deâ*, and he thinks me also a kind of divinity, not of the *plebe degli Dei* ; as for my part, I consider myself only as a sylvan divinity ; but to satisfy M. de Grignan, who may be apprehensive that I shall marry him, I inform him that another widow, young, rich, and of a good family, has been married to him for these two years, struck with his wit and merit, after even refusing *Presidents-à-mortier*, what more need be said ? as to him, after being sought for by this widow, whom he ought to have sought for, at length yielded at the age of sixty, quitted his abbey, to have no other employment than that of a Christian and Cartesian philosopher, and be the cleverest man in this province. He is always at his castle, and his wife, who is both young and genteel,

genteel, is never happy but when she is with him. He has visited my son and me, and if we are very well pleased with his conversation, he seems ravished with ours. You would certainly like this man, whose name is M. de Guébriac; he came fourteen leagues to see us, and the idea he entertains of you gives me great pleasure; I should not be satisfied with any merit that was ignorant of your's.

My dear Paulina, I have been ravished at seeing once more your writing; I was apprehensive you would have forgot me in your prosperity; it is so great a one for you to be upon good terms with your dear mamma, and to be worthy of her esteem, that a little head like your's might easily be turned by it. I advise you to continue the exercise of all your little perfections, which will secure your mamma's friendship for you, and at the same time the esteem of all the world. I am, indeed, my dear, very well pleased, for your amusement and the honour of my prophecy, that Paulina is become amiable and gentle, and as you would wish her to be. I cannot comprehend why Mademoiselle de Camus's pretensions to matrimony, are not as good now as if her uncle had went to Rome, what a jest! was she considered as the niece of a minister of state? he is nothing more than a Cardinal of great merit, and a saint; there is no change in all this.



L E T T E R DCCXXIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, October 2, 1689.

IT will be to-morrow a twelve-month since I saw you, since I embraced you, since I heard you speak, since I left you at Charrenton. Good God, what a lively remembrance I have of that day ! and how I wish for another, that may be distinguished by seeing you again, embracing you, and clinging to you for ever ! can I not thus end my life with the person who has solely occupied it ? this is what I feel, and what I tell you, my dear child, without designing it, as it were to commemorate the end of this year of separation.

After this, I must tell you, that your last letter is so gay, so vivacious, has so much of the *currente calamo*, that it charms me, because it is impossible to think any write so pleasantly, without being blithsome any in good health. Let us first speak of the Chevalier ; I find his situation very different from that in which I saw him. What see him stamp with his right foot ! as to the left, it still kept the field with glory, though it was sometimes pretty much humbled by the state of its coadjutor, and which made us as uneasy as it did him. In truth, nothing but a miracle could restore him the use of that right foot ; for he moved

moved pretty nearly with the same gait, as M. de la Rochefoucauld, which often excited tears; and is this change brought about by three quarters of an hour's bathing for three successive days, in that salutary water? neither *Mont d'or* nor *Barege* could have effected such a cure. This remedy, then, is only used for three days. You may assure the Chevalier of the sincere joy I feel, from the efficacy of these charming waters, till such time as we may pronounce a complete cure. You greatly praise M. de Carcassonne's assiduity, in comparing it to your attention for me; I can easily judge none can be so tender or so consolatory. The Chevalier thinks, then, that Madame de Ganges* is greatly altered, this is very pleasant; she was really much to blame, not to correspond with the idea he had framed of her: as to me, I thought her somewhat resemble that model, but then she was far beneath it; for besides her face, so many things are wanting, as well with respect to air and grace, and what constitutes beauty, that the resemblance is almost dwindled to nothing. If I had known she had been the wife of Ganges, whom I had so often seen, methinks I should have viewed her through a very different medium; but the thing is past now, and let us talk of Madame de Montbrun; Good God! with what vivacity do you paint this woman! your brother is charmed at the portrait, but he will not tell you so, he only embraces you, he is with his honest friend; and I thank you for having left every thing, and taking the trouble to fly with such impetuosity, and depict once more this woman, who is really an original! crammed full with her noble ancestry,

* Sister-in-law to the unfortunate Madame de Ganges. The name of this lady was *Gevaudan*.

which she traces as far back as the flood; not to mention her Guelph and Gibelin relations, that make so respectable a figure in the page, and which at once excite contempt and laughter; her reveries in calling the Marquis d'Huxelles her enemies, when she certainly means the Germans; and all those crowns with which she decorates and entrenches herself; her astonishment at seeing your natural complexion; her fancying you have neglected yourself, in leaving the natural colour of your little veins and skin perceptible, and that you should dress your face; and because you display that which God has given you, to her you appear quite neglected and undressed; these are extravagancies you have touched off to a charm. Messieurs de Grignan are very skilful to find her complexion quite natural: this shews men's discernment, they neither know what they see or what they say; I have met with those who have admired beauties still less admirable.

You have made a pretty journey to *Saint Esprit*; you have seen M. de Bavière, the terror of Languedoc; you have also seen M. de Broglie *. I look upon our Revel as the *Cæsar*, and Broglie the neglected *Laridon* †. Has not the Chevalier seen them both in the chains of Mademoiselle de Bouchet? Broglie was so furious a lover, that he was one of the causes of her throwing herself into the Carmelites.

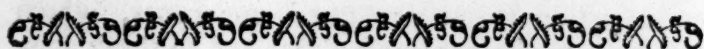
* Victor Maurice, Count de Broglie, commanded in Languedoc; he was brother to Charles Amedeus de Broglie, Count de Revel.

† See La Fontaine's Fable upon Education, Fab. 165.

I must

I must add, my dear belle, we are no longer angry at our good governors, which charms me ; I was almost distracted to think they were blameable. It is certain, and all our friends agree, that the Duke could not say a syllable to the King, neither about Brittany or the deputation, without being quite improper ; Rome was the sole object. He spoke to M. de Lavardin, and wrote to Marshal d'Estrées : Madame de Chaulnes has told M. de Croissi all that could be said ; and nothing can be plainer, than that they would have much delighted in succeeding ; but we think no more about it, and if by accident we should get it, we should consider it as a miracle. This is not the greatest evil that arises to me from the Pope's death ; I am really afflicted, when I reflect upon the loss you are going to sustain by this death.

I thank you, daughter, for making me so cleverly one of the members of your society, by acquainting me with what passes in it : nothing is so dear to me, as what comes from you and your family. I recommend to you the care of your valuable health, and to preserve your youth, and this for a particular reason. I laugh with you at M. de Grignan's gout, this is a fine consolation to a groaning man ; but every thing is preferable to a violent cholic. God preserve you all ; my compliments, friendly remembrance, and addresses, where proper ; and as to you, my dear child, you know your share, it is myself altogether.



L E T T E R DCCXXX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, October 5, 1689.

I Never thought it adviseable to attack certain iron wires in the cap, which run the length of the face; this advice would be very good to give to certain people of our acquaintance. I had heard it said that this was a sign of good harmony; but this cannot be, as too small wires penetrate the temples, prevent the circulation of the blood, and cause abscesses; some die of the application, the luckiest have only their faces lengthened an ell, and as pale as corpses; but youth who come from the country recover with time. I am much inclined to lump this story with some others formerly related by the good Princess of Tarantum; however, it is good to know every thing. I do not in the least doubt that M. de la Garde, who never refused a remedy, will avail himself of that of Madame — whom you mention. You will see him with his head bowed down, his feet uplifted, *turning an affair* * like that; I, indeed, believe, that if we were to pursue for any length of time this regimen, we should no longer have fore eyes; I have no opposition to make to the recital of this visit. We have had a very honest

* It has already been observed that this was a favourite expression of M. de la Garde.

man,

man, with much good sense, the most agreeable, the most easy, the most learned, and the most of every thing desirable, capable, and worthy of every kind of conversation; he has been here eight days, one of his brothers-in-law is come, the Abbé du Marbeuf, who spoils nothing, another brother-in-law of the Count de Lis, who would spoil every thing if he opened his lips; this is a latent misanthrope, for his melancholy never escapes him; he is very well made, and sings so much like Beaumaviel, that he might be taken for him. When our worthy man departed, every thing was superlatively flat and stupid; we renewed the just observations we made in this country with you, upon good and bad company; we found that the bad was infinitely preferable, it admits of an agreeable respiration, and make those happy, whom it quits; and the people who please, leave you as if you were fallen from the clouds; there is no pursuing the clue of the day's work; in fine, it is a great misfortune to associate with sensible people, but this misfortune does not often happen.

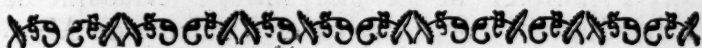
You tell me news about our deputation, we are not willing to think any more about it. Madame de Chaulnes has twice treated upon it very well with M. de Croissi. Abbé Tetu is animated by Madame de la Fayette to remind the minister, and passes so well in review all that Madame de Chaulnes had represented, that every thing is to be hoped from his zeal and earnest endeavours to accomplish all he undertakes. Madame de Chaulnes has entrusted him with the care of this affair, as she is not always at Versailles; Madame de la Fayette performs miracles; the

Duke de Chaulnes has written to Marshal d'Estrées, who desires nothing more than to serve us ; such is our situation. For my part, I believe M. de Coetlogon will carry it, for the reasons I gave you the other day. The other candidates are M. de Lanion, and M. de Chateaurenand ; we wait for the unravelling of all this with a serene look, and undisturbed mind. I thank you for having prevented the Chevalier's writing to M. de Cavoie * about this affair ; it would have been highly improper.

My son laughed most immoderately about your Madame ; he has heard of a certain long visage at Rennes, he wants to know from whence she has borrowed it ; he is gone to visit Marshal d'Estrées at Rennes. You ask what we have done with our thirty ships. Alas ! only what is always done with them. We were charmed to receive them at Brest, this was one of the most important matters in the world, they are all set sail together, they steered as far as the isle of Ushant, and then they returned to Belleisle, from thence to Brest, and that is the whole. You find that he who said there had been no decisive action at sea since the battle of Actium, was quite in the right. Madame de Lamoignon has been brought to-bed of a son at Baille ; in her way to Paris, the coachman overturned the vehicle, and killed the poor child, what say you to having or not having a good coachman ? You are in the right to be pleased with the diversion the gout affords M. de Grignan's intestines. May God preserve the inside of this place, and prevent the outworks being so dreadfully insulted, for whatever comes under the

* Brother-in-law to M. de Coetlogon

denomination of pain is very dreadful to sustain ; this the Chevalier will not contradict. Let me constantly know how the waters of Balaruc agree with him, and at what time your states of Languedoc are to meet ; ours will be convened the 20th of this month at Rennes. Adieu, my dearest girl, how heartily glad I should be to go and walk with you all upon that beautiful terrace.



L E T T E R DCCXXXI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday October 9, 1689.

NONE of your letters, daughter, are yet come to hand, I am quite unhappy when this satisfaction fails me ; I shall, to-morrow, have two at once ; I must, I find, accustom myself to these disappointments. I am here all alone, my son is gone to Rennes to visit Marshal d'Estrées, and my daughter-in-law to see her mother. I shall to-morrow have with me a woman, whom I like well enough, so that I shall not be quite alone. M. de Pommereuil has given Marshal d'Estrées the Duke of Chaulnes's letter. Madame de Chaulnes has conferred twice with all her might with M. de Croissi ; the Abbé Tetu dwells upon this Duchess's discourse and memory to the minister ; if, after this, we lose the deputation, I shall say it is because M. de Chaulnes is at Rome ;
because

because M. de Lavardin did not hold the states; because M. de Chateaurenaud, and M. de Coetlogon, who are in the service, are preferred; in fine, because it was not God's will, for we have, on our part, gone beyond the utmost of our little abilities; and I shall not amuse myself with hating people, who are, I am persuaded, as much vexed at it as myself; and so here ends the chapter. What say you to M. de Seignelai, a minister at six and thirty? Madame de Lavardin tells me prodigies of Madame de Mouci and her brother *, who has forbid his secretary, in a manner to enforce obedience, to take any thing whatever, either directly or indirectly; and to make this conduct the more agreeable to him, he has given him 2000 crowns at starting, and has doubled his salary from eight to sixteen thousand livres; and the wages of the other servants are raised in proportion, to secure them from every kind of temptation. You will agree that this alteration is both fine and noble, and which must flatter a great soul, like this magistrate's. Madame de Mouci, his worthy sister, finding his table and expences increased, gave him the other day 12,000 livres worth of entire new plate, and will not even allow her brother to thank her for it, because she says she has no use for the money, and it is no object. Sincerely, I do envy such deeds, it touches me to the heart to find souls of this turn; it is making a proper use of riches, and placing virtue in her proper and foremost rank:

* Achilles de Harlai was just appointed first President of the Parliament of Paris.

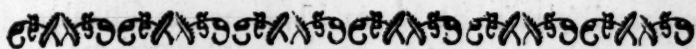
I thought

I thought you would be pleased with this story concerning a family whom you love: I also wrote to Madame de Mouci, that the King, the Parliament, France, and all the Pleaders, should be publickly told to rejoice at the nomination of such a man for such a place. I am persuaded that my letter did not displease her; but it is plain she does not intend to answer it, and that she will not allow herself the least raillery: God bless and conduct her; since she will be in paradise after leaving this world, she is no longer with us, and is very happy.

I have been informed that the Marquis d'Huxelles has been very well received at court, which is at Fontainebleau, and that the Duke of Burgundy and his governor * have both an intermitting fever: all this you know, my dear Countess. Had I received your letter I would have answered it, and would not thus ridiculously amuse myself in beating the bushes. If I had received a visit from Madame de Montbrun, I could have written innumerable volumes; but every thing here is so uniform that matter is wanting. I believe that the States will not be convened till the twenty-fifth at Rennes. I do not know the precise time that the Parliament will return thither. A President and four Counsellors have been created: it is, perhaps, expected that these posts will be filled. M. de Bailleul has resigned his post in favour of his son, M. de Memes officiates for himself; here am I a Gazetteer again. Let

* The Duke de Beauvillier,

us enquire about Grignan, how doth the poor Count? where are the enemies? are they within, or without the place? he must allow us to wish him pains in his arms, that his intestines may be saved; but we wish that the whole place were in a good situation. Does the Chevalier return to Balaruc? it would be laying in a good winter stock of health. Where is M. de Carcassonne? cannot M. de la Garde raise his head, and move his feet down? is Paulina born dressed, or does this only happen sometimes? and you, my daughter, are you handsome, that is to say, are you well? I incessantly think of Grignan, about you all, and your terraces, your fine and triumphant perspective; I leave my woods to walk with you; but amidst such a succession of ideas, I am terrified, when I reflect on the negotiation that is this very instant carrying on to dispossess you of this charming county? *but no more of that.* Embrace me, love me, and believe me entirely your's, and that it is now a year, a complete year, since I have either seen or met with you.



L E T T E R DCCXXXII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, October 12, 1689.

HERE they are both; but, good heaven, how miserable I should have been at receiving the first without the second, by which it appears that the Chevalier's fever has abated, and afforded him a day's ease! this changes the horrid aspect of a continual increasing fever, accompanied with suffocation, lightheadedness, or drowsiness; this is a most dreadful disorder. The blood, the constitution, the gout must all combine in this. What a pity it is that such warm blood, which often does such brilliant things, should, sometimes, perform such ill offices, and render the others useless. In a word, this is a very melancholy affair for you all, and you in particular, as the goodness of your heart makes you the guardian of all those you love. This makes me still more with you at Grignan, though I was frequently there, by my greater attention to what passes since this illness. Distance exposes us to the writing of much nonsense, or at least it becomes such by its tardy coming to hand: we are melancholy, busy, or uneasy; a letter from Brittany appears, which breathes nothing but mirth, ease, and bagatelles: I am ashamed of it, but I have told you a hundred times, these are the jarrings of a distant separation.

I have

I have informed you that I am no longer displeased at M. or Madame de Chaulnes. It is certain, and his friends have informed me, he could not, with any kind of propriety, have mentioned the affairs of Britanny. He recommended my son to M. de Lavardin, thinking he would have the same desire to serve him as he had, and this was true. He has since wrote to Marshal d'Estrees, and this letter would have had a proper effect, if the King had not publicly declared to all the candidates for the deputation, that it had for a long while been engaged; Madame de la Fayette tells me this, without saying to whom, but it will shortly be known; she adds that M. de Croissi mentioned my son to the king, who did not seem to make any objection to him; but that the same day his Majesty declared himself, and this was what the Marshal expected, who is not very willing that the governor of Britanny should lose this brilliant privilege, provided it goes hand in hand with his interest. Madame de la Fayette has freed him from all his engagements, and thus the business has ended. My son is at Rennes, where the Marshal is much pleased with him, being very intimate with him, having seen him a hundred times at the Marchioness d'Huxelles, strenuously contesting for Rouville; he plays every night with him at back-gammon; he waits for the arrival of M. de la Tremouille to pay all his respects, and then return hither with his wife; this is the most decent plan he can pursue. I am still quite alone, but do not find any inconvenience from it: the lady from Vitre will be with me to-morrow, she has been detained by business. I must relate to you what Madame de la Fayette writes, in the style

style of an arret of council from above, first from herself, then from Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Lavardin, threatening to love me no longer, if I refuse returning soon to Paris; saying that I shall be indisposed here, that I shall die, that my wit will flatten, in fine, I must make no opposition but come, and that they will not even read my wicked reasons. There is so much vivacity and friendship in it, my dear, that I could not help being pleased. These are their ways and means proposed; I am to go to Malicore with my son's equipage; Madame de Chaulnes is to dispatch thither the Duke's; I am to lodge with her at Paris, I am not to buy any horses till spring; and the pleasantest of all is, I am to find a thousand crowns in my coffer, from a person who has no occasion for the money, who will lend it me without interest, and will not hurry me to repay it; and that I must speedily set out; this is a long letter for a person just recovered of a fever, I also answer with gratitude, but in raillery, assuring her that my son's company and his wife's, books, and the hopes of returning to Paris without lodging out of doors, or being in want of an equipage, as I shall have one, will not be very irksome to me, any more than not being in debt a thousand crowns to a generous friend, whose noble and magnanimous behaviour would distress me far beyond all the bailiffs in christendom; to which I added, that I gave her my word I would not be ill, would not grow old, and would not doat; and moreover that she would always love me notwithstanding her menace; this is the manner in which I answered my three worthy friends. I will, one of these days, shew you this letter of Madame de
la

la Fayette *. Good heaven? what a proposal to be out of my own house, to be dependent, to have no equipage, and to owe a thousand crowns! indeed, my dear child, I would much rather, without comparison, be here; winter in the country is horrible at a distance, when it approaches it wears a different aspect. Tell me whether or not you approve of my conduct; were you, indeed, at Paris, this would be an insuperable argument; but this is not the case. I have taken my time, and concerted my measures accordingly, and were you to fly thither now miraculously like a bird, I know not whether my reason would not intreat your's, with the permission of our friendship, to let me accomplish this winter certain little payments which constitute the repose of my life. I could not refrain from relating to you this trifle, hoping it will not come unseasonably, and that the Chevalier will enjoy as good a state of health as I can wish him.

You astonish me in saying that M. de Chaulnes appeared to you such as you paint him to me. I assure you that during our voyage, it was impossible to be better company than he was; I know not whether your genius inspired him with vivacity; but you would certainly have found him as I described him; I do not trace his resemblance in the picture you have drawn of him. My son imagined that the sneering female he mentioned, had desired him not to speak in his behalf, but he now finds he was mistaken.

* See the Collection of Select Letters, p. 27, 28.

Your

Your dream has greatly surprized me, you think it a falsity, because you did not perceive ever a tree before the door; but you will laugh to hear it is certainly true; you brother cut down all the trees two years ago; he is very fond of a fine perspective, just as you dreamt, and to such a pitch does he carry this passion, that he is going to raise a butterefs wall in his parterre, and turn the tennis-court into a bowling-green; so that there will be nothing between the road but a ha, ha, wall. It is true, that when executed it will be very agreeable, and make the parterre uncommonly beautiful; it is planned upon the design of M. de Notre, and quite filled with orange-trees in the place *Coulanges*. Futurity must have unfolded itself to you in this dream, since you observe all that is past. I preserve your letters and your dream for my son and his wife, who will be charmed with your amiable friendship.

I am far from being upon bad terms with M. and Madame de Pontchartrain †; I saw them at Paris since your departure; I have wrote to them both; he has already answered both me and my son very agreeably; there is nothing particular between them and me, for it is now time to be our governor's friend. I return twofold all the friendly regard of my dear Count, I honour and

† Lewis Philipeaux, Count de Pontchartrain, succeeded in September 1689 to M. Pelletier, as Comptroller-general of the finances, upon his predecessor's desiring leave to retire. M. de Pontchartrain had been first President of the Parliament of Brittany, and had for some time officiated as Intendant of that province. It was at this time that he had some misunderstanding with the Duke de Chaulnes. He was afterwards Minister and Secretary of State in the department of the Marine, and then Chancellor of France.

salute

salute the sage la Garde, I embrace Paulina, and my heart finds its destination in my dearest girl. May the Chevalier be cured by the will of heaven, and may this letter find you all in health and happiness. Tell me which is the Chevalier's chamber, that I may be with him. Abbé Bigorre informs me that M. de Niel fell down the other day in the King's bed-chamber, by which he received a contusion; Felix bled him, and cut the artery, and it was absolutely necessary for him to have the grand operation performed upon him immediately: what say you to this, M. de Grignan? I know not which I pity the most, he who suffered, or the King's first surgeon who cut the artery.



L E T T E R DCCXXIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, October 16, 1689.

HOW happy I am, my dear child, that the bark should have its usual effects! I acknowledge that I trembled when I opened your letter, for every thing is to be feared from such a constitution as the Chevalier's. How happy that so hot a remedy should agree with the warmth of his blood! you have great reason to believe that I was uncommonly concerned in the event of this disorder. But as you are the center of all these conduits, and the source of all health, I am infinitely rejoiced with you at so much success.

Do

Do you know that I am still more surpris'd that the gout should have cured M. de Grignan's intestines, and fine weather have driven away the gout, than that the bark should have cured the fever? you may then praise yourself for the rice diet, which is so softening, and which may have wrought all these miracles. I take care not to be absent from Grignan, whilst you have so much satisfaction in seeing all your Grignans in such good health, I am too deeply concerned. I cannot now go to Paris, lest I should be an absentee; Madame de Lavardin's manner of intreating me, is somewhat pleasant, as she would facilitate all the means of doing it, and in what a style Madame de Chaulnes talks; it should seem that she were governess of Brittany, but I shall plainly shew her that Marshal d'Estrées lady is the present governess*, and that I am no longer under her laws. In truth, it must be owned, my friends are very amiable; I do not think it possible to use more forcible expressions, or to devise more solid expedients; and all this because they conjecture my present situation irksome, that I shall be ill, that my mind will lose its proper bent, and, in a word, that I shall die; so they want to see me, hold me, and govern me: M. du Bois is also an accomplice, this is a whimsical conspiracy; I am fond of it, and am greatly obliged to them for it, without being in the least moved. I will preserve their letters for you; you will find whether friendship and truth do not shine in them.

I am informed that M. de Coetlogon will have the deputation; I never doubted it;

* Marshal d'Estrées commanded in Brittany in the absence of M. de Chaulnes.

nor do I think that M. de Chaulnes doubted it either. He is not without discernment, he saw the return of the Parliament, the present of the city of Rennes, the part that M. de Coetlogon seemed to act in all this, as governor of the city where the States are held. Every thing is in his favour, he makes an enormous expence ; it is lucky that the journey to Rome confuses this affair, and prevents the right object being perceived ; I question whether this good Duke could with all his might have prevented it, so that God orders every thing for the best.

But when I accused M. de Chaulnes of negligence, I was not for depriving him of justification ; what, my daughter, shall I catch you, a Cartesian philosopher, reasonable as you are, and so just in sentiment, judging him guilty where he is not, because he may have been somewhat inactive upon another occasion, which blinds you to other objects ? This is a strange kind of justice, you would have been sorry if the fourth Court of Inquests had judged your cause in this manner ; for my part, I am, in this respect, just of the same way of thinking as if we had obtained the deputation. I nevertheless felt in this part whilst I was writing upon it, but I thought he would have found a passport with you, and that you would have recollected what I often repeat, *whatever is good, is really good ; and whatever is true, is really true ;* this should always be viewed in the same point of light ; if there be any false faces in other respects, they should not be blended upon this occasion, any more than certain waters with other certain rivers. I moreover thought that you recollected that ingratitude was the object of my greatest aversion ;

aversion; in truth, I cannot endure it, and I hunt it wherever I meet with it : but I find you have forgot all this, as you imagined there was something forced in what I said to you ; I felt it, but spare me, at least from the thought of displaying that kind of ridiculous provincial generosity, I should be sorry you thought me so altered; this pretty sentiment flowed so naturally from my pen, that I resume the subject again very naturally, and I conjure you to be persuaded with the same justice, that if tardiness and negligence have appeared upon this last occasion, that justification is not less true, nor ungrateful people less ungrateful ; in truth, these things should not be confounded; and you even find now that these Governors were not to blame.

I am not recovered from my astonishment concerning M. de Chaulnes's wit, and the alteration you tell me you found in it; indeed I do not know it again ; he was quite a different kind of man during our little journey ; it was your genius that restored him to life, your presence was too powerfully added to the business of Rome; they overcame him. There is a Venetian Cardinal named Barbarigo, Bishop of Padua, who had more votes than were necessary for his being elected Pope ; but the *accessit* spoilt all. I know not what this is ; all that I can find is, that it prevents the election of a Pope ; but, nevertheless, there will be one too soon, I often wander, struck with this melancholy reflection.

I am quite pleased with Coulanges's natural praises of Paulina, they are very
 VOL. X. F well

well applied, and make me comprehend her kind of accomplishments, curbed, however, by intruders ; if the Count had painted only her fine eyes and her fine shape, and left the rest to you, Paulina would have set the world in a blaze ; the colouring would have been too powerful to withstand ; this pretty mixture is far preferable, and makes altogether a very amiable creature. Her vivacity resembles your's ; your wit always bore away the palm, as you say of her's ; this panegyric I am fond of. She will soon learn Italian, by the assistance of a better mistress than you had. You deserve as perfectly amiable a daughter as that I had ; I told you, that you might do all you would with your's, by reason of her disposition to please you ; she appears to me very worthy of your friendship. Here I am all alone, my son and his wife are still at Rennes ; my female visitor from Vitré is returned, I am very well, so do not pity me. My son waits the arrival of M. de la Tremoille, who is expected immediately. He is with Marshal d'Estrées as with a person of his acquaintance, he plays every night with him at backgammon. Every countenance is expressive of joy at Rennes, upon the return of the Parliament, which will take place the first of December ; the States will meet the twenty-second of this month ; the Marshal's behaviour is very polite and agreeable ; the Bretons are very well pleased at the change ; this, my dear girl, is all the news I can tell you. Be not uneasy about my solitude, I do not dislike it ; my daughter-in-law will return speedily. I take care of my health, I would not chuse to be ill here ; when it is fine, I walk ; when it is wet or foggy, I do not stir out ; I have learnt wisdom ; but you who are the Queen
and

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 99

and the efficient cause of health in others, take care of your own, and consider that your preservation is a still greater good for them, than that which you have conferred upon them.

Madame de Mouci has made another present to her brother of a beautiful piece of Bellievres tapestry, the subject is, *the beheading of St. John*, and is worth 2000 pistoles. How happy she is to be able to make such pretty presents! I find that M. de Grignan issues very good orders against *the half converted*. You are, I find, to have M. de Vins for a neighbour; his grand-father * made a great figure there formerly. It is said here that the K. of E. has defeated M. de Schomberg: I shall not give entire credit to it, till that news reaches St. Germain's

* Hubert de Vins made himself respected by the League party in Provence and in Dauphiny. See the Memoirs of Castelnau, p. 606, and the following, Vol. ii. Brussels, 1731. See *Nostradamus* and *Bouche's History of Provence*.



L E T T E R DCCXXXIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, October 19, 1689.

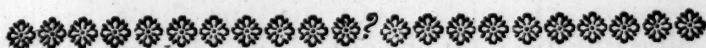
YOU may, if you please, be angry at M. de Chaulnes ; as for my part, I cannot ; you have justified him to me, your words had their effect upon my mind, I shall not change my opinion, more particularly because the perpetual remembrance of him, Grignan, Toulon, and Rome, from whence he wrote to me the fourth, work upon me, as if he had really done me a kindness : I can discover nothing but agreeable assiduities ; and the most I said at first was, that I never knew a person remember those he had forgot. But I now discover his policy, and I do not comprehend how you Messieurs Grignans, who are courtiers, particularly the governor of Provence, can think it strange, having known before we did, that for various reasons this deputation would be M. de Coetlogon's lot, that upon his departure he should only signify his intention to M. de Lavardin, and write about it to Marshal d'Estrees. It may easily be conceived that he was not willing to lay himself open, and make it appear a disappointment, when he is happy enough to be able to conceal it under the Governor of Brittany and the Ambassador to Rome, and puzzle all enquiry by his absence. It is lucky to fall to M. Coetlogon's

Coetlogon's lot, as he had no share in the appointment ; if he could not have succeeded in preventing it, we should have had a bitter dose to swallow ; and I moreover say, if he had not been Ambassador, methinks according to the politics of a courtier, the King being engaged to M. de Cavoie, he should have seemed to be reconciled to it, rather than appear in his government with a deputy that was disagreeable to him. I leave M. de Grignan to judge of what I say, and I look upon the hasty conclusion you draw in your letter, as the effect of your friendship for us all, and not the result of your reflection ; in God's name tell me whether I have made a convert of you, as for my part, I cannot alter my belief. Formerly a Governor was the most agreeable situation in the world, he chose whom he pleased, and the King approved of him without any difficulty ; this charming prerogative has, by degrees, vanished. M. de Charot made the first incroachment upon it, he made MONSIEUR write ; and by means of this turn he, that is to say his son, was not deputy till two years after ; the enemies afterwards became powerful, and they lay very heavy upon Brittany and the Governor. Gacé completed the ruin of the whole through M. de Cavoie, and it was necessary to have recourse to a hasty ill-cemented peace to avoid this mortification ; at length this deputation is this year compromised, and it is given to a man, who really is entitled to it, and who has never had it ; and M. de Chaulnes was not forced to consent to it. All this is according to rule, should we not be just and consider ourselves in the situation of others ? this is what is never done. My son is clever, he is well qualified for it, but he has quitted the service, and it has been made up to him

him by the *arriere-ban*. M. de Chaulnes was, nevertheless, in hopes of giving these things a favourable turn, by means of the circumstances, whereby Britanny has got into favour this year. God orders a hasty journey to Rome, nothing is to be mentioned to the King but Rome, incessantly Rome; what can be done? this is an arrangement of Providence; it is a cruel journey to us, equally fatal to my son and daughter. This letter, my dear child, is somewhat long and tedious, I am sensible of it; but it is dangerous to fet me once a speaking; yet I must have a few more words, did not that Duke write to you from Rome? Madame de Chaulnes is transported with joy to know that he is not only very well, but that he was saluted by the discharge of cannon as Ambassador, without giving up the franchises, which enraged the Spanish Ambassador; he had solicited all the Cardinals to prevent it. The court is very well pleased with this auspicious beginning, and consider it as a presage of the sequel. A word to the Duchess upon this head would be very pretty. Here is the Abbe Bigorre's billet; but how I am correcting myself; well, it shall positively be the last time.

I am still all alone here, but I am not weary; my daughter-in-law will return in four or five days. My son is the Marshal's favourite; Revel, who is going, will keep him till the opening of the States; he also expects M. de la Tremoille.

LETTER



L E T T E R DCCXXXIV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, October 23, 1689.

I Am always alone, my dear child, without being dull, my health is good, I have books to chuse, work and fine weather ; these with a little reason will go a great way. I see through all that my son and his wife tell me of their great inclination to see me, that they are charmed at being at Rennes ; and I, from this moment, am really willing they should be there. I forbid their returning, I even think they are in the right, there is very good company at Rennes, where every thing is very brilliant ; the Bretons appear insensible with regard to the several millions that are going to be asked of the province, they think only of the return of the Parliament in that poor city, and in that palace which is the finest in France ; this is where the States are held ; nothing can be more magnificent ; curiosity also drew many people thither to see the new faces of Marshal d'Estrées, M. de Pommereuil, M. d'Eaubonne, M. de Lezonnet, instead of Messieurs de Chaulnes, de Fieubet, de Harlai, with d'Harouis ; people are fond of change. M. de la Tremoille passed through Vitré three days ago ; he was received with much noise on account of his horsemen, this is one of those occasions, when honours and duties are increased according to the

prerogative of certain estates. He makes a *tremendous* appearance, with his fine shape and his blue ribband ; no one but M. de Grignan can be compared to him, I would even say on account of *beauty*, were I not afraid of offending this Count, for it is certain that M. de la Tremoille surpasses him in that. He sent me numerous compliments, and would have waited upon me, if his retinue had not been so fatigued ; and I returned them, without having any. Abbé de Roquette is with him, he wrote me a very pretty letter, full of praise and affection, just as his uncle would have done. The States met yesterday, I question much the beauty of the speeches. The Nobility are fond of having M. de la Tremoille for their President ; they do not like M. de R. though he is of a good family ; and when he will be divested of the order of the Holy Ghost, he will be much humbled ; for he should not, at least, be without it, this is a slur upon a Duke and Peer. So much for Brittany, you will, perhaps, be tired with it ; but these are the natural fruits of our garden ; we shall afterwards speak of Provence. Let us say something of the Pope, for there is one ; if I had been at Paris, I would have gone to kiss his mule in the chamber of the Abbé Bigorre, he is there painted to perfection. It is Cardinal Ottoboni, a Venetian *, an intimate friend of M. and Madame de Chaulnes, as also of Madame de Carman †, whose merit he adored, besides her beauty, at eighteen. This is the man we have to deal with ; here is this Duke tracing out the greatest interests ; this is he who deprives you of your dear Avignon : I wish

* Elected Pope October 6, under the name of Alexander VIII.

† Madame de Carman was at Rome with M. and Madame de Chaulnes in 1670. She was then Madame de Murinais

he may upon this occasion display all the good sense which I have known him to be possessed of, and I do not think he has left any of it behind him. Madame de Lavardin informs me that this Ottoboni is the honestest and most able man in all the sacred college; but he is seventy-nine years of age, is not the mind somewhat beyond the line at this age? the poor good Abbé says yes; but the late M. d'Arles said no *. So that we should believe that, every one when chosen will fill very well this high employment. For my part, I should be of Patrick's opinion, that it was not worth while to put on the papal robes at so great an age, any more than to dress again upon the return of a violent illness, with which Patrick was afflicted at that age. Madame de Chaulnes is very much afraid that her husband will be left at Rome, to be at hand for the approaching conclave. Let us say a word or two about this Duchess; I will tell you a secret that will make you love her. But we must first lay it down as a fundamental fact, that if they could they would have been charmed to have conferred the deputation upon my son; it may easily be believed, that they would have liked it much better than that it should have fallen to M. de Coetlogon. Nor can we imagine that they interested themselves in behalf of the latter, as you all exaggeratedly say, since M. de Chaulnes mentioned my son to M. de Lavardin, and recommended

* Madame de Sévigné quotes the example of the Abbé de Coulanges, her uncle, who died August 23, 1687, aged eighty; and that of M. d'Arles, uncle to M. de Grignan, who died March 9, 1689, aged eighty-six, to infer that the minds of those who attain to their eightieth year, lose more their powers a some than in others.

him by writing to the Marshal; and Madame de Chaulnes, supported by the vivacity of the Abbé Tetu, mentioned him twice to M. de Croissi; this appears very clearly, but observe the sequel. This good Duchess really grieved, that M. de Chaulnes's presence before his departure, had not operated in favour of this deputation what they both hoped for, took it into her head, with Madame de la Fayette and Madame de Lavardin, to make me come to Paris, imagining that the ill success of this business keeps me in Brittany, and that her absence from Rennes casts me upon the Rocks, for she imagines if the Duke had held the States, I should not have left them. She was agitated by these notions, which gave such strength to that conspiracy of my friends, as greatly importuned me; and, in a word, it was Madame de Chaulnes, who was to lend the thousand crowns, but with so good a heart and so good a grace, and with such an earnest desire that the offer should take place, that Madame de la Fayette, thoroughly satisfied of the sincerity and friendship of this good Duchess towards me, earnestly intreats me to plague myself no more about this deputation. Madame de Chaulnes continues to write to me that what is deferred is not lost; that my son is young, that many people wait ten and fifteen years for this place; and that it is her business, without saying a syllable about the thousand crowns; I am, nevertheless, going to say a word to her about them, as Madame de la Fayette has entrusted me with the secret; but this Duchess wanted to put them into the hands of Beaulieu, that I might think they had fallen from the sky; but all this neither tempted nor bewildered me, for such a behaviour would sooner compel

pel me to acquit the debt, than all the bailiffs in the world. I have made a just observation about the misfortune of being in debt; those who press us are very pressing, those who do not press us are still more pressing. This is a long harangue, but I was willing to shew you the bottom of the bag, and also of her and myself; and as it is a difficult thing not to have a good opinion of the heart of a person who is quite natural, and who is continually thinking of me in so friendly a manner. My Paris friends are very well pleased with the behaviour of this Duchess; such is the course of the things of this world, and the judgments that are formed without hearing both parties. I hope you will not be tired with reading all this minutiae, for I must acknowledge it would be difficult to curtail them, as I take an uncommon pleasure in relating them to you. But I have done, my amiable girl, in embracing with a tenderness that is peculiar in its kind. I do not yet talk of my schemes, methinks I shall be free about the end of the summer, it is still a good while till then: we will concert our measures together, having the same design of meeting.



L E T T E R DCCXXXV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, October 26, 1689.

I Believe, my dear girl, that at this very moment you are no longer in possession of your fine county. The first thing the King does with this new Pope, who is entirely agreeable to him, and beyond our hopes, is to give him up this charming spot, which was so convenient to you : this reflection overwhelms me with grief. I have some news about the Abbé Bigorre that you will not be displeased to hear. M. de Chaulnes is too fortunate, no one can dispute him the claim of being the best Pope-maker in the world. The present is so good a man, that we could not hope for him, he is a Venetian ; it was he who answered on the fourth of October to the Ambassador's compliments ; and on the sixth, by way of thanking him, M. de Chaulnes made him a Pope ; for this exaltation was a sudden operation quite in the French taste, against the opinion of the Spaniards and Germans ; he is one of the cleverest men of the Sacred College, and has no other fault than being eighty years of age. This news has quite transported Madame de Chaulnes ; the holy father has enquired after her and Madame de Carman, saying he should die contented, if he could but see them once more. All France has been to com-
pliment

pliment the Ducheſs, I imagine you will write a line to her, as well as the Duke, though he deprives you of Avignon. This is the luckieſt event in the world for him, you know all this, but one cannot help talking.

M. d'Arles is now with you; he writes to me from Paris, and I ſhall answer him at Grignan, and as he ſpeaks to me of his abdication *, I ſhall not hesitate telling you my thoughts upon it, though it be a ſettled thing, and he ſays M. de Pomponne and Madame de Vins have approved of it : it is ſo eaſy to obtain approbation, that it cannot conſtitute authority. He tells me it was only uſeful to M. de Grignan, this alone confutes him; is being uſeful to one's relation in ſuch a place nothing? he need only conſider how agreeable this will be to M. d'Aix, to know how mortifying it muſt be to M. de Grignan. Beſides, when does a Grignan think it no object to be agreeable to his family? Thoſe, whom you ſay love one another to the laſt drop of their blood, in whatever ſtation have they not given ſufficient public teſtimony that they form but one? whence, then, does it happen that the Archbiſhop gave his opinion the lie, and renounced this happy and good reputation? I am of your ſentiment, that one muſt be very punctilious to be galled with a bit of

* The place was that of Preſident of the States of Provence, which M. d'Arles (*John-Baptiſt Adbemar de Monteil*) had filled after M. de Marſeilles (*Touſſant de Forbin*). But by the nomination of M. de Valence (*Daniel de Coſnac*) to the Archbiſhopric of Aix, M. d'Arles being obliged to give him up the place of Preſident, he thought it was no longer incumbent on him to aſſiſt at the aſſembly of the States, to avoid being only in the ſecond place, according to the rank of the Archbiſhop.

wood upon a bench, which constitutes all the difference of places, which is neither personal or nominal, and which has no other foundation in this *assembly* for a few days, but as it relates to the Archbishop of Aix, and the Archbishop of Arles. Should this be sufficient to urge him to speak to the King, like a man who after having made a long sacrifice, can no longer endure the weight and disgust that are become insupportable? Is it possible that the King should have really entered into the merits of this complaint, without being surprized that the honour of serving, which was so highly valued, upon entering on the office, can no longer support him against a mortification which exists only in his imagination? In a word, my dear, I am hurt at this abdication, and I wish he may repent of this as of the others, in order to avenge us. But I have said so much upon this head, that I shall refer the Archbishop to it, if he is willing to do me the honour of knowing my sentiments upon what he informs me of, and I shall only slightly touch upon this affair in my answer.

But let us enquire a little about Madame de Reinié *, what a fury! did you not think she was dead, and that her spirit came to persecute you with her noise, as in her life? as to me, I should have been greatly terrified, and should certainly have made the sign of the cross; but I believe something more is necessary to get rid of her. Is it possible a woman can travel 150 leagues to ask money of a person, who dies with impatience to pay it as soon as possible? no one's arrival at Grignan would astonish me so much as her's, I

* A shopkeeper at Paris.

screamed

screamed out. You are, however, quite in the right to behave civil to her ; but how could you avoid her paws, and that inundation of words, in which one is drowned and overwhelmed ? I am quite pleased at what you tell me about Balaruc, I saw it upon the map. It is a melancholy thing that the Chevalier can find no relief, and that his disorder should have spoilt all the good effects, which we at first thought the waters had produced ; I sensibly feel this misfortune. These waters are very violent, I would not trust any of my limbs with them, and more particularly because I have now no disorder in my hands ; I know not where all those little extravagant disorders are concealed, I sometimes think there is treason going forward, I am so perfectly well. I shall greatly pity you, when you are all separated ; you will then really have no other company than Madame Reinié, and another, whom I must own is quite insupportable to me, as she is to you. But you sometimes bid me say certain things only to the eccho ; I shall take care not to intrust it with the least thing : we have one here in this *place Coulanges*, which is like that of la Trouffe, and which babbles quite into one's ear. A propos of la Trouffe, M. de la Trouffe has received very little benefit from the waters of Bourbon.

The day after I wrote to you, I saw my daughter-in-law return when I the least expected her ; she left Rennes, in spite of all the world and all the amusements there, to come, as she says, to me, preferring this pleasure to all the pastime of the States. This surprised me, and would have made me uneasy, if I had not clearly perceived she was very well pleased, and that
this

this expedition was done with as good a heart as it was a grace. Du Mesnil has brought the opera of *Atis* to Rennes, it is curtailed, but it is very pretty. My daughter was present at the representation of it once, and was very well satisfied, and more so to return hither; she says "that all the world tormented me at Rennes upon my being so desirous to return to the Rocks; but, Madame, when I reminded them it was to be with you, they all agreed that I was quite in the right; particularly Marshal d'Estrées, M. de Rennes, M. de la Tremoille, and M. de Pommereuil." In fine, here she is, I judged that this little account would not make her appear in a bad light to you. As to my son, the Marshal would not let him come, he is the only one with whom he converses upon every subject. He is quite unhappy that my son is not appointed deputy, he was very desirous of doing us this piece of service, as well as Madame de la Fayette, who had solicited him upon the occasion. He does much approve of the choice made of M. de Cavoie, the friend of M. de Seignelai, you see the rest.

Our States met on Saturday the twenty-second, there was a great throng, crowd, and confusion; but at length the Marshal spoke very well, better than was imagined. The first President *de communi martyrum*: M. de Pommereuil is very lively in his way, but not not so well, as Fieubet and Harlai, whose speeches were very energetic; in all the harangues the Duke de Chaulnes met with eulogiums, and the news of the exaltation arrived very opportunely the same day. On the morrow M. de Pommereuil asked three millions for the King, which were immediately granted,

granted, though, in fact, we know not very well where they are to be had, with M. de Harouis's contest; for he cannot now, with a good grace, make any rejoinder. After seeing these good beginnings, Revel is set out to resume, as he hopes, his first calling. He passed through here on Monday, but only staid to dinner, and went to lie at Laval. We asked him what kind of death all his mistresses had chosen? he answered very well, that they would chuse it with M. de la Tremoille and the Count d'Estrées, in whose hands he had left them. We spoke about the Chevalier, he appeared but lukewarm in his esteem for him; he boasted of having known him both in war and commerce, I also assured him that ingratitude was among the number of vices he held in the greatest abhorrence. He hopes to be sent to Germany with Marshal de Lorges, I recommended to him the Marquis of Grignan; he told us it was for him to request the Marquis's protection, he was so much out of exercise. How cruel it will be, my dear girl, if you cannot this winter see this poor child! is he not eighteen years old this month? The Germans are provoking with their winter campaign.

We pass our time here in much tranquility, which you have no reason to doubt, but very fast, which is surprising work; walking, conversation, reading, all these are called in to our assistance. A propos of books, you tell me wonders of the last productions of M. Nicole; I have read some passages that appeared to me very fine; the author's style is enlightened as you say, and makes you enter into your own sentiments,

ments, in such a manner as discovers the beauty of his mind, and the goodness of his heart; for he never scolds out of season, which is the most disagreeable thing in the world, and never produces the desired effect. I did not then purchase this work, it was this last Lent, I contented myself with the good le Tourneux *. We are reading a treatise of that pious man of Port-Royal †, upon *continual prayer*, which is a sequel to certain pious works, that are very fine; but, child, this which is much larger, is so spiritual, enlightened, and holy, that though it be far above us, does not fail to please and charm. We are pleased to find that there have been, and are still people in the world, to whom God has communicated his holy spirit and grace in such abundance; but my God! when shall we be possessed of some spark, some degree of it? How shocking it is to find ourselves so far behind, and so near to other things! oh fy, let us not mention this misfortune, we must be humbled at it a hundred times a day.

It is a month since the news of M. de Schomberg's defeat has been propagated in this country; it was communicated from St. Malo's to M. de Louvois; but as it has not yet been confirmed by a courier to the Q. of E. it is judged to be false.

* Nicholas de Tourneux, Confessor of Port-Royal, so well known by his excellent book entitled the Christian Year, and by a great number of other important works.

† John Hamon, physician to Port-Royal, author of several very pious and enlightened writings.

Madame

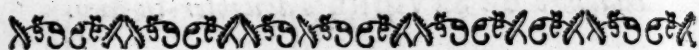
Madame DE SE'VIGNE's daughter-in-law.

I have, my dear sister, seen all that you have said about M. de Sévigné and myself. He continues at Rennes, and I have had sense enough not to hesitate a moment in repairing to Madame de Sévigné. I am certain you will not disapprove of my taste, and that this choice will not place me in a disagreeable point of view in your opinion. I shall not speak to you about the deputation, this subject is exhausted; we support so well this disgrace, that it shews we were worthy of what we hoped for. I am charmed, my dear sister, to find that our apartment is quite ready at Grignan; I embrace you most tenderly, is it not agreeable to you? If I dared, I would also embrace M. de Grignan; but my friendship for him is so lively, that I have many scruples.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE'.

In truth, it is with regret I resume the pen, for she writes very well; but I must embrace my dear Countess.

LETTER



L E T T E R DCCXXXVI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, October 30, 1689.

I Cannot refrain from mentioning the grief of all your separations; I have long since felt for you upon this score, saying that you would be too sensible of the misfortune of having had such good company; but you have changed your opinion. I informed you this summer that the Chevalier might pass the winter at Avignon, or in some other part of Provence, to enjoy your fine sun, and add such a benign winter by way of appendix to the waters of Balaruc, as many people do who dread the colds of Paris; you refer very far back, saying this is wishing him the worst thing that could happen to him; that if he were to remain there, it would be a sign that he were too ill to return; that otherwise he would go to see his friends and the world. Tell me, then, what has happened to make you now think, that he would do well to pass the winter in Provence; for as to me, being persuaded that the waters have not succeeded too well, he would have but a melancholy winter at Paris in that little chamber, with your handsome picture, which does not utter a syllable, let one say what one will to it; and

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and I think that if it pleases God that he should be ill, and cry out loud, in this case he must infinitely regret your absence, for he is not a man that admits of trifling consolations ; we should hope for a more agreeable state. I should therefore have been of opinion that the climate of Provence would have been the most eligible this year only, as it was so near at hand. You will acquaint me with the manner in which all your separations have taken place. M. d'Arles is with you, and you have put my letter into his hands ; I am more pleased than ever to have frankly told him my mind with respect to his abdication. He boasted of having obtained the approbation of Madame de Vins ; but she informs me that he concealed from her this resolution, thinking very justly that she would disapprove of it on account of M. de Grignan, and several other things relative to it ; this, then, is the manner in which Madame de Vins and Madame de Pomponne approve of this measure. You did not inform me of the King's answer, which you were so curious to know ; as for me, I do not in the least retract what I said upon this head.

It is assured that the first thing M. de Chaulnes did the day after the exaltation, was to give up Avignon. My God, daughter, how this thought affects and troubles me ; this grief too is justly founded, considering the circumstances it throws you into. When I reflect and speak upon this subject, it is my own real business, I can think of no other. But I must suppress these bitter thoughts in my letters, they do but renew them in your heart ; but they will escape sometimes.

times. It is said that M. de Lorraine is going with his troops into winter-quarters; we shall do the same if this be the case, and you will then soon see your son again, I wish you this consolation.

The taking of Bonn, and the death of Baron d'Asfeld *, has caused some chagrin; the King and M. de Louvois regret his loss, and highly praise him as a very able officer, and a skilful negociator. M. de Chaulnes's negociation may continue longer than is thought for; he is considered as the only person that can inspire the Pope with a real inclination to restore peace to the Princes of Christendom. His Holiness does not at all like Cardinal d'Estrées, whom it is thought will return to court. We shall see what God has ordained; *leave him alone*, says the holy Bishop of Angers, who comes to make his visitation at ninety-two, with the same good sense as he always possessed. Adieu, my dear child, why do you say you are no longer handsome? why are you heated? why is your blood cholerick? my own is sometimes moved at it; endeavour to pacify yourself, avail yourself of your fortitude, your philosophy, your christianity, to support the burden of troubles which Providence allots you. Your sister-in-law says a thousand civil tender things to you; one of her greatest extravagancies is, to make me speak of you. I embrace M. de Grignan; I no longer know how

* Elder brother to Marshal and Abbé d'Asfeld. He commanded in Bonn, where he made a vigorous defence; he sustained an assault, in which he was mortally wounded; he surrendered October 12, and made an honourable capitulation twenty-seven days after the trenches were opened, and after a blockade of upwards of three months, during which time the enemies had destroyed the city by cannon and bombs, before they began to besiege it in form.

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I stand with the others ; I fear that ere this reaches you, the birds will be all flown. We had here for some time your fun, and you had our showers ; but for these two days past, I believe every thing has resumed its former situation ; so that you must have fine weather. Paulina has wrote me a charming letter, she says with great audacity, that *she is not afraid of destroying* ; that, on the contrary, she pretends to surpass the praises Coulanges has bestowed upon her, that she learns Italian, you are her mistress, and she reads *le Pastor-fido* ; and then puts a very pleasant question, the slut ! Truly I send her back to her relations.



L E T T E R DCCXXXVII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, November 2, 1689.

YOUR letters come now better to hand, than when it was fine weather. The sky of your Provence is in a state sufficient to terrify one ; you are not accustomed to these torrents ; you paint your castle in great disorder, and if you had not saved all your fine goods, and particularly your cabinet, that is worthy of a place at Versailles, I should have been very much afflicted. We begin to feel the rain, but as we have still some fine rays of Phœbus, I profit of them with pleasure, because this soil is as dry and agreeable as that of our poor Livri ; so that I shall often walk. The beginning

beginning of your letter is filled with great things in a few words; *Ottoboni Pope*; the county, *given up*; the King and M. de Chaulnes *triumphant*; and Madame de Grignan, *ruined*; this is what hurts me greatly, and which my heart feels but too sensibly; we must endeavour at least to let hope supply the place of that solid consolation which his Majesty gave you. If you should enter upon this business towards the end of next year, and you should both go to Paris, it would be quite convenient for me, as the horses would serve us both. But I do not comprehend M. de Grignan's notion, *only at Easter*; I comprehend better that of returning to Grignan to pass the winter after the Assembly, notwithstanding the North wind, which becomes still more untractable at that time; this would, at least, agree with the Chevalier's health and your business. In fine, my dear, you are all wise folks, your conventicle is met, you will take proper measures, and so we will confide in such good heads. I am very desirous that M. d'Arles should give you his reasons, and that he should also see my letter; we are upon good terms enough for me to tell him my sentiments upon a subject which he mentions to me first; I beg you will not allow him to place Madame de Vins among the number of those he has consulted, and whose approbation he has received. You think my friends proposals very agreeable, you are quite right; they were very much so; but it is sufficient to have had the pleasure of this trial of their hearts and friendship; for, in other respects, it would have been doing little honour to our first resolutions, to have changed them, and have been burthened with another debt of a thousand crowns. Indeed, daughter, there were no other steps to be taken, than what I did that

that is to say, being sensible of their goodness, and being completely grateful for it. Were I to frame a Gazette of the state of my health, you would be convinced that I kept my promise with Madame de la Fayette; you would see under the article of *the bladder*, that all that country was in a perfect state of tranquility; that the sandy people, who had formerly made some incursions there, carry on their operations in more distant countries; that letters have been received from the extremities of the kingdom, which impart that the legs were never in better condition or more fit for service; that the hands, which are upon the frontiers, are no longer subject to the caprices of the nerves their neighbours; nor the vapours their auxiliaries: in a word, that this state would be a most perfect country, if the fountain of youth could be met with in it; this constitutes all its misfortunes. After this ridiculous Gazette, which you have desired, methinks you may be quite easy with regard to my health.

It seems you are making some reparation to M. de Chaulnes's faculties; you find they are so good at Rome, that you must think he was meditating at Grignan upon all these important affairs; thus he is restored to your good opinion in this respect, and he must also with regard to the deputations. He was not in the wrong to dispose of them for fifteen years, without mentioning it to the King, as Marshal de la Millarie always did *. But a change has taken place with regard to this for four or five years, as in every thing else.

* He was Governor of Nantes and Brest; and Lieutenant-general of Upper and Lower Brittany.

What gudgeons has he not swallowed ! you have seen him. He knows that his good friends have found out a new road for deputations ; he is sensible of it, and he always said to my son *, except this year, that it is necessary to be a courtier now, as these times are changed. As to this year, he thought the Nobility and their commander might have had some weight. He had, at least, reason to believe that his recommendation might do something, either by writing from the province, where his service was agreeable, or in setting out for Rome ; his timidity, or else the impossibility of speaking about Brittany, prevented his proposing the deputation to the King ; he only recommended it to M. de Lavardin, and wrote about it to Marshal d'Estrées : nor do I yet know, if he did not expect to find M. de Coetlogon in his way, and he would thereby have only exposed himself ; I believe this is the truth of the matter. It is so certain that nothing is thought of but pleasing the city of Rennes, that by the most unheard-of measures, which I am much pleased at, the deputation of the clergy has been given to M. de Rennes by a letter de cachet ; this is such a packet as never before entered Brittany upon such an occasion ; for the Bishops used to succeed according to their rank, and this year it fell to the lot of M. de Vannes, or M. de Trequier, who are so greatly astonished at the proceeding, that they know not what to think ; but it is sufficient to be M. de Rennes, who is quite astonished too, and asks if the packet be certainly for him ; for never was one before sent for a deputation ; judge if the governor of Rennes

* M. de Sévigné had quitted the court upon retiring from the army.

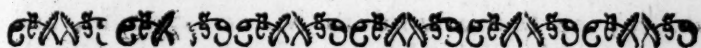
would not have obtained it with more justice. Madame de Chaulnes is so surprized at all this, that she keeps her eyes constantly fixed upon Rome, and is much in the right. The King said to her last week ; " Madame, M. de Chaulnes was not long at Rome before he made himself spoken of, he has met with more good friends there, and he has been very well received." She answered, " Sire, he that bears your Majesty's orders, is always well received." The whole court was ready to stifle her with compliments and friendship ; I hope you have wrote to her. I am of your opinion, my dear child, that M. de Chaulnes will remain there for another conclave, or rather to conclude with the Pope, who loves him, the principal objects they have to confer upon together, and those which he intends disposing him to approve, or confirm for the general tranquility ; this would be a fine stroke ; and if Madame de Chaulnes and Madame de Carman were at Rome, they would be proper seconds for him. But this Pope hates Cardinal d'Estrées as much as he loves the Ambassador, and it is thought his eminence will return to France ; if so, Madame de Chaulnes's departure will be deferred. I am as much afflicted as you, that the last Pope, who let us remain in possession of Avignon, did not live as long as M. d'Arles * ; but such longevity would have been too lucky for you, and it was not God's will. I informed you that M. de Chaulnes entered Rome like an Ambassador, *al dispetto* of the Spanish Ambassador, who endeavoured to prevail with the Cardinals to prevent it ; but out of fifty-

§ These two prelates lived the one to ninety-five, the other to eighty-six.

six voices he had but five. I do not give mine to M. de la Garde, either to preach or scold ; I know very well that Jesus Christ, St. Paul, and St. Augustin; preached and exhorted, it was their business ; this latter gives such good reasons for it. But a poor sinner, recovered only three days from a worse state than our's, should keep silent, penetrated with God's mercy towards him, solely occupied with his happiness, and the sensible acknowledgment he owes to his Saviour, for having selected and distinguished him from among so many others, without any merit, but through free grace : such should be the only sentiments of his heart, and if charity should make him interest himself for his neighbour, it should be in lamentations before God, and supplicating the same grace for others, as has been so plentifully poured upon his head. Such was Madame de Longueville, that penitent and holy Princess ; she did not forget her situation, nor the abysses from which God had saved her ; she preserved the remembrance as a basis for her penitence and lively acknowledgment towards God. Thus is christian humility preserved, and the grace of Jesus Christ honoured. This does not preclude reflection, and christian conversation with one's friends ; but no sermons, no scolding ; these revolt, and make us recollect and refer them to their past life, because we find that they have forgot it. I am astonished that people of good sense should be guilty of this injustice, but we should be astonished at nothing ; for what do we not meet with ?

It appears that our Marquis will soon be in winter-quarters, with the rest, and who may pay you a visit ; I wish it, my dear-child, this

is the greatest consolation you can have; I have a great desire to embrace him as well as my dear Countess. I am very glad that the Count grows fat, he was always thin when I saw him, which made me uneasy. The description you give of your storms, is so beautiful and poetic, that it gladdens my imagination.



L E T T E R DCCXXXVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, November 6, 1689.

M. De Chaulnes has wrote to me very tenderly and very agreeably; he says that he might boast of the brilliance of his negociation, were it not for the mortal grief he feels at having been compelled to offer the Pope the charming county; that he did it with so bad a grace, that he thought his Holiness would have refused it; but that he was unfortunate enough to be deceived, and that, on the contrary, the Pope received it with such pleasure as renewed the good opinion he already had of his Holiness. Thus, daughter, the deed is done; *God gave it you, and God has taken it away from you*, we must bear up against this loss, as well as many others. I must tell you once more, that, if you are just, you must agree that this Duke has not deceived us. He told us before the last meeting of the States, that things had changed, that he was no longer the master as formerly, and that one should shew one's

one's face a little at Court ; I have told you what grounds he went upon latterly ; he had some reason to believe that at least this year, his solicitation would have as much weight as another's. He spoke in this style to M. de Rennes when he passed through Malicorne ; I cannot doubt of his inclination to have obliged me and my son, he did not think it proper to talk of Brittany at Versailles ; he said a word to M. de Lavardin, and wrote to Marshal d'Estrées ; Madame de Chaulnes to M. de Croiffi ; and M. de Cavoie has done what you are acquainted with. The Ambassador is lucky, that all the disgust he must have had upon this head, is concealed and confounded in his absence, which has done us much honour in this country ; for every person at Rennes considers my son as the deputy M. de Chaulnes would have appointed ; and M. de Coetlogon, as the deputy of his journey to Rome ; wherefore we have no reason to complain, and indeed we are very far from doing it. I must acknowledge to you, that I do not believe either you, the Chevalier, or any great Lords or Governors of Provinces, will think it fitting that the Governor of Brittany should be divested of the agreeable privilege of appointing deputies independently, without having it said that M. de Chaulnes took upon himself a sovereign power ; he certainly would have been much to blame not to have done it, as all other Governors do it. Since the marriage of the Duchess Ann with Charles VIII. this fine extensive province had many other privileges. M. de Chaulnes for fifteen or sixteen years followed the last footsteps of the Marshal de la Meilleraie ; do you think it either noble or just to make a merit of degrading this handsome government ? Is it not the

the common interest of all great Lords and Governors? Should they not view themselves in this example? I am acquainted with two or three who have been very lively affected at it with regard to themselves, and it cannot be one of this body who has introduced such a revolution. Alas, what do not these poor Governors do to please their master? with what joy, with what zeal, do they not fly even to the hospital for his service? Do they consider their health, their pleasure, their business, their lives as any thing, when obedience to his pleasure is necessary? and yet it is a matter of complaint for them to have an honour, a distinction, an opportunity of obliging persons of quality in a province! And wherefore is it they want to be beloved and honoured, and act as Kings? is it not for the service of the real King? is it for themselves? Alas! they are so passionately attached to his person, that they only wish to lay aside those great comic parts, to come and behold him at Versailles, when even they cannot expect to be looked at; and yet they are denied that grandeur which they so properly use. But, my child, is it possible that you should differ from me in opinion? M. de Grignan, come then to my assistance, support me, it is your business; if you desert me, I shall wish you every kind of disgust in your province, and I shall praise and admire those who, by their industry, may find out how to place you upon the footing of others. I will say no more, and why do you make me speak my thoughts? I will, at least, confide in you; and moreover, I know nothing so clever as to understand reason. M. de la Rochefoucauld and M. de la Feuillade would not indict me for my sentiments upon this head.

Let us speak of our States. The Holy Ghost came in a cloak-bag to the council of Trent, says Fra-Paolo ; so the deputation is come in a letter de cachet to M. de Rennes ; these vehicles are equally extraordinary. Marshal d'Estrées will not let my son leave him for a moment, he knows no body but him, he speaks to no body but him, he pays his visits in company with him ; in a word, he is so little acquainted with Brittany, that if he had not found a commensal officer of the Marchioness d'Huxelles, he would have been quite embarrassed. He keeps a most extravagant table, the Marshal surpasses M. de Chaulnes, it consists of eighteen covers noon and night, all served in gadrooned plate ; in a word, it is who can spend the most ; for there are twenty tables of the same magnitude. The Opera of Atys is performed very agreeably, by Menil ; and there are also comedies.

How sorry I am for the Chevalier's ill state of health ! what a cruel fever ! good God how I pity him ! He is much in the right not to go to Paris in such a situation ; how much I should be discountenanced there without you or him ! Your stay in Provence has compleatly settled mine here. Here are Madame de la Fayette, and Madame de Lavardin's letters ; as to Madame de Chaulnes's, it was a volume without end ; dwelling upon the persuasion that it is her absence that makes me pass the winter at the Rocks instead of Rennes, she places to her account all that can possibly happen to me there ; and she was so sincerely disposed to give me that golden shower, that she was never tired of entreating me to set out ; but, daughter, this is
finished,

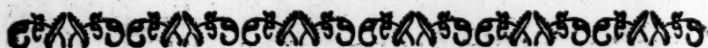
finished, I find myself very well here, particularly when you are at Grignan.

I am informed that the Pope has convened his friends to terminate the affair of the franchises with France and with all crowned heads; and another congregation to examine the means of making a general peace in Christendom. It is thought that Cardinal d'Estrées will return, and that Cardinal Bouillon will remain for the affairs of France. I am persuaded that the Ambassador is not ready to return.

Sainte-Marie, my old friend, the King's lieutenant at St. Malo's, has been to see me. He told me he had wrote to you for a solicitation; I beg that you may satisfy him: he is a man that would go any lengths to serve me: every body loves him in this country; he is the consolation of all exiles, and prisoners of St. Malo's; in a word, he is a little Artagnan faithful to his Prince, and humane to those whom he is obliged to guard. He has a thousand good qualities, he says that he has borrowed them of me: you recollect how I answered him, in assuring him upon my word and faith that our religion was preferable to that of Calvin. I should greatly pity M. de la Garde, if he had forgot his first condition, which should never be separated from christian humility, any more than our gratitude to God. M. Nicole is quite divine.

My son still continues at Rennes; his wife takes great pains to divert me. M. de Lauzun is going to make a romantic voyage to Ireland with six thousand men. Preserve yourself,

self, my dear girl, and love me with that tenderness purposely designed for us.



LETTER DCCXXXIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, November 9, 1689.

M. D'Arles has, then, gone through those fires of Tasso, those gigantic phantoms, those armed men, for these were the defenders of the passage^{*}; and has found nothing but dry and barren heaths. For my part, I was in hopes to have found wood enough for our last floor, and that M. d'Arles would thus have found his apartment habitable, and M. de Grignan would no longer have been compelled to go up the gutters, the impropriety of which I thought he was convinced of long since. Thus, my dear, all would have been finished; but how can M. de Carcassonne resist M. d'Arles's vivacity, who seizes upon the hare, saying give me four thousand crowns, go to sleep again, and let me alone? As for me, I really think he is in a lethargy; it

^{*} See Canto III. of Tasso's *Jérusalem*.

Madame de Sévigné's imagination was so lively, her wit so just, and so ornamented, that the excellent use she made of her reading is not at all surprising. But it is extraordinary, that as a mother she should be persuaded to find a daughter worthy of her, as well with respect to wit as taste, which were so necessary to comprehend perfectly all the delicacy of certain applications.

must

must be a very thick vapour that prevents his answering a syllable to such forcible reasons, and he must be shook still more, and tormented still more to awake him. I imagine M. d'Arles will receive at Grignan the letter I wrote to him; will he answer easily in regard to that noble haughtiness for which I blame him, and which makes him personally feel a preference of seats, that relates only to his benefice, and which as little dishonours the Abbé de Grignan, as it does honour to the Abbé de Cosnac? In a word, daughter, these are flights of imagination, that cannot be suppressed.

I thought the letter you wrote to M. de Chaulnes very pretty; he answers you with reasons, and you find he did all he could. Madame de Chaulnes has sent me a little account, which she says is only for myself, of a conversation between the Ambassador and the Pope; I find in the answer which the Holy Father made him, a presence of mind and surprising vivacity, which greatly surprised me, and which plainly shew he possesses all his faculties, and is long lived. I send it you, as you may perhaps be pleased to know it. This Duchess says she hopes you will pardon her husband the injury he has done you, and that the armies are preparing to send you back your son. She is afflicted at the grief of Madame de Soubise, who has lost her son *, after incredible sufferings, and at that of Madame de Guenegaud, who has not only lost her youngest son at Bonn, but her eldest, whom she loved dearer than her life;

* Lewis Prince de Rohan, Colonel of a Regiment of Cavalry, died November 5, of a wound he received July 5, near the Camp of Lessines in Flanders.

she has none now but the Abbé Guenegaud, and another, who is also a priest; thus our foresight into futurity affords us only useless anxiety, as God is preparing for us other troubles.

I dread mentioning to you the magnificence of Rennes, lest it should cause you an indigestion, for there is nothing but festivity going on; they dine with M. de la Tremoille, and sup with the first President; or dine with the M. de Pommereuil, and sup with M. de Rennes; then dine with M. de Coetlogon, and sup with M. de Malo; thus it is each successive day. How does it agree with you? there are twenty tables equally elegant, this is devouring of estates. My son informs his wife, I imagine through regard, not supposing it is upon my account she is here, that her absence is much lamented by all her friends, and that he is very sorry her delicate stomach prevents her partaking of all those pastimes. She answers him in a passion, that she is quite offended at such language; that she did not come here on account of her health; that she is acquainted with the life that is led during the sitting of the States; that it was solely for the pleasure of being with me, which she prefers to every thing else; that if her stomach were equal to that of the best chairman's in Rennes, she would do just the same; and all this so naturally, that I am greatly obliged to her for it, without my having the least scruple at seeing her here. We read a good deal, and the time passes away so fast, that we are not much wearied, except it be in wishing to embrace you; for this is what, I must acknowledge, I ardently wish for. Adieu, it is the finest weather in the world, and I imagine you enjoy

enjoy a sky still more serene; it is the summer of St. Martin-tide with us, and the dog-days with you. I embrace and kiss my amiable daughter on both cheeks.



L E T T E R DCCXL.

To the same.

The Rocks, Suunday, November 13, 1689.

YOUR letter is not yet come to hand, this is always a melancholy circumstance for me; though I somewhat get the better of those apprehensions occasioned formerly by this retardment: it is the whim of the post, and we must endure it; but as I am constantly with you at Grignan, I lose the thread of the conversation, this is what grieves me. I know not whether you go to the assembly with M. Grignan, or whether you remain at your castle. I am very uneasy about the Chevalier's health, and the effects of the bark, repeated in its usual dose: its heat operating upon that of the Chevalier's blood, makes me call to mind what is sometimes said, *when a brave meets a bravo, they remain braves*. We also hope that this brave bark will make the blood remain brave: may it please God; it is very hard to conquer.

Tell me what you have done with Madame de Reinié; is she still clamouring? how have you silenced her? I will not loose the rein to tell you about my tender and sensible friendship,

ship, and the lively interest I take in all that concerns you near or distant, as all this keeps the first place in what is dear and precious to me; I hold it in much higher esteem than my own little affairs, which appear like hyssops in comparison to your tall cedars. How can I help feeling all that you say to me upon this journey to Paris, the proposal of which you envy my friends for? I had much fortitude to resist, when you were at Grignan; had you been at Paris, the great offers would have been superfluous, you destroy all my measures, I find: but having concerted them so agreeable to yours, it was not easy for me to be put out of my way. Thus, my dear child, I entertain myself, this forms my subsistence, which I would not mention to you, but cannot avoid it, considering it as the solace and consolation of my latter days: God and providence are above all things. I am informed of the death of that good and worthy man the Bishop of Nimes; so that our poor Livri is again to give away; I wish the Abbé Pelletier may obtain it.

I have received a long letter from my new friend, the *Man Wolf* Guebriac; I would have sent it you, as his style, which is very natural, would be very agreeable, if he did not praise me so much; in truth, my modesty will not suffer it: he is so astonished to find a woman with some few good qualities and principles, and who in her youth had some charms, that he seems to have passed a life in a whirlwind of passions, among a banditti equally divested of laws and faith, and where love alone reigned, despoiled of every kind of virtue; this gives rise to some very pleasant things. I claim my credit

credit with you, in the name of M. Descartes, to instruct him properly with regard to the Court of Love*, which he has heard mentioned, and which he considers as a fable. He is a man of the cabinet and curious, he wants to know this truth from the Governess of Provence, and if upon complaint to that court, and judgment were pronounced, it would be by female judges: you have got some wits from Arles, and a prior from St. John at Aix, am I not right? who will acquaint you with the truth of this affair? Guebriac met with this sheet by way of preface to a book of Francis Barberin's †, who makes mention of it: I send it to Paulina, she will understand this prose as well as *le Pastor fido*. Such a trifle you will intrust some one with, and not trouble yourself about it. Were you at Aix, Montreuil ‡ would settle this matter for his old friend, whose sense is very different from his; but, in fine, you will do what you can without trouble.

The

* The Court of Love was nothing more than a society of people of wit of both sexes, which was instituted in Provence towards the end of the 11th century. They communicated to each other their works, and they conversed upon different subjects, in which love had always some share. The quarrels and jealousies of lovers were the common objects of their judgment; they determined upon the merits of the *Tançons* written upon this subject; the *Tançons* were a kind of poetry which the *Troubadours* or *Trouveres* had brought into reputation, in which were treated curious questions about love and lovers. Martial of Auvergne gives in the sequel a collection of these judgments, intitled *Aresta Amorum*, and upon which Benoit le Court, a famous lawyer, published in 1533, a learned Latin Commentary.

† See Bayle's Dictionary, under the article *Barberin*.

‡ The same as is mentioned in the Historical Dictionary of Moreri, under the article of *Montreuil*. It is there said, that *Marbion Montreuil* or *Montreuil* died at Valence in Dauphiny in

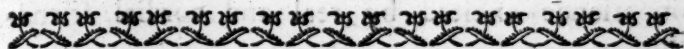
The handsome Abbé of Rohan *, so fine and indeed too fine, is at present the head of the household of M. de Soubise, and his livings are given to his younger brother †. Our States broke up yesterday, he will himself send you the news. The Marshal's expence was extravagantly ridiculous: he had every day sixty guests to dine and sup with him, and every thing was served with such magnificence as eclipsed M. de Chaulnes, who indeed would have been sorry to vie with him. Adieu, my most amiable girl; this is enough for to-day, how stand all the particulars of your complaints? your side, your cholic, in fine your little *Gazette*: mine always continues the same. My daughter-in-law embraces you, and continues her solicitude to divert me.

in the month of July 1692; and, it is added, that he then lodged with M. de Cosnac, his friend, and Bishop of Valence, afterwards Archbishop of Aix. But M. de Cosnac was not Bishop of Valence in 1692, as he was named Archbishop of Aix in 1687; and as it is certain that Montreuil followed him thither at that time, we must conclude, that Montreuil died at Aix, or any where else, rather than at Valence.

* Hercules Meriadec, Prince and Duke of Rohan Rohan, became the eldest by the death of Lewis Prince of Rohan his brother.

† Armand-Gaston-Maximilian de Rohan, afterwards Bishop of Strasburgh, Cardinal and high Almoner of France.

LETTER



LETTER DCCXLI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, November 16, 1689.

HERE they are both; that of the 3^d travelled to Rennes without my being able to discover the reason; the fault was occasioned at Paris; I received it on Sunday, after having sent away my letters. I will begin by entering upon the motion that agitates you all, and which is so reasonable, to know speedily if Madame de Maison's compliment is well grounded: she has frequently told us very wicked news, I recollect; sometimes good too: but when we hope to learn that the Chevalier's regiment will devolve to his nephew, it is so natural and easy to believe, that we must commit violence upon ourselves to doubt of it; and you that are so skilful in raising phantoms, will find some difficulty to find subjects of despair upon an occasion where every thing is in favour of the Marquis; examples, his name, his father's and his uncle's merit, his own personal merit, all these place him at the head of this fine troop. You do not doubt, my child, that I am entirely like yourself in every thing that regards you; you cannot dwell too much upon it, nor too often repeat your thoughts; I share in your reasoning.

reasoning *pro* and *con*, and in the dialogue of fear and hope : I therefore wait like you with all the impatience excited by real and cordial friendship.

I now know what is become of that talking mill Madame Reinié. I know that you have resolved to go to the assembly, and afterwards return to Grignan. Thus am I instructed about the Chevalier's health, whose pardon I ask for not coinciding with him concerning M. d'Arles's resignation. I should have heightened the value of holding this second place to the King, which I should have made him understand I filled only for his service ; but, in fact, I should not have been the least displeased ; I should have been charmed to have kept it, and served my elder brother. The more I feel myself a Grignan, and above M. d'Aix in every other respect, the more I should have been insensible of that short meeting, when the prerogative of one Archbishopric over another constitutes the difference upon this occasion only*. In fine, I acknowledge to you this is my notion, and which, I thought, from his nobility and elevated sentiments, would also have been his : I have been mistaken, but however much I esteem his good sense, I shall not change mine. On the other hand, I praise the Archbishop to have the resolution of completing his building, and I admire him for having obtained 4000 crowns from M. de Carcassonne.

* The Archbishop of Aix is the first *Procureur*, by birth, of the county of Provence ; and in this capacity he always presides at the assembly of the States, which are held every year at Lambesc.

Your

Your sister-in-law desires me to tell you she thinks herself too happy in having been able to please you, as she did in following her own inclination. You greatly increase by your approbation the joy she had in doing what she calls her duty. She has not been sensible of her husband's absence, he was so near her, and she so frequently heard from him; she was so sure that he would soon be with her, that no chagrin has appeared in this amiable conduct. You speak of all this in so natural and friendly a manner, that you rekindle all my fondness.

Your county then is given up. I wish that this principality of Orange, which is so sincerely surrendered to the King, would recompence you for your loss; but it has been a long while in your government without your being any better for it. I am charmed to think you have wrote to Madame de Chaulnes. Do you not like the little conversation I sent you? I am informed that Coulanges is a favourite with the Pope, that M. de Chaulnes is making a state-coach, and he keeps a table as he did in Brittany; this looks like being settled. A propos, our States broke up on Monday last, they have granted 10,000 crowns to Marshal d'Estrées, he has spent that sum and more. The deputies are M. de Rennes*, and M. de Coetlogon, the rest are not worth naming. Your brother will be here to-morrow; he brings with him the Abbé Charier, and my Farmer of Buron, who is a lusty gentleman, Madame de Marbeuf, and some others; we are more afraid of

* John Baptist de Beaumont, Bishop of Rennes.

so much company, than our solitude. Surely my son often quotes the good brothers, who order separate beds in the dog-days; romances are reasonable productions in comparison of this idle book. I shall say nothing of Paulina's taste with regard to romances; I read them like many other persons of superior understanding to myself, so that I must hold my tongue. Examples might be quoted both good and bad with regard to the reading of these books; you do not love them, and you have succeeded very well; I did like them, and yet they did me no harm; every thing is wholesome to the healthy, as you say. As to me, who chose to support my taste, I found that a young man became generous and brave in viewing my heroes; and that a girl became wise and honest in reading Cleopatra. There are people who sometimes take things wrong; but they would not act better, perhaps, if they could not read; the essential thing is to have the mind well disposed, and then it is not easily warped: Madame de la Fayette is another instance in my favour. It is, nevertheless, very true and very certain, that M. Nicole's works are preferable; you are charmed with them, this may serve as a panegyric to the book: from what I read of it at Madame de Coulanges's, I am easily persuaded it must please you. You will be very happy, and much to be envied, if God has made use of this amiable book to inspire you with his love. I, at least, derive this grace from it, that I am persuaded there is no other object truly worthy of our esteem in this world. Upon this supposition, I conjure you, my dear Paulina, not to let your mind turn towards frivolous things, but that you attach yourself to what

is

is solid, in which class I place history; otherwise your taste will be but of a wan complexion. We are reading the History of the Church by M. de Godeau *; it is really a very fine work; in what a respectable light it places religion! we are ready to suffer martyrdom with *Abbadie*. Every thing is properly timed, *Corisca* is very pretty and very roguish, *altri tempti, altre cure*. Ever love me, my dear belle, but never weigh other friendships in the same scale with your's; your order is placed in the foremost of all ranks, which no one else can approach.

* Anthony Godeau, Bishop of Grasse and Vence.



L E T T E R DCCXLII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, November 20, 1689.

YOU have extricated me from much uneasiness, in telling me that our Marquis is Colonel of his uncle's fine regiment; nothing could be more favourable to him; it is scarce possible to be more advanced at eighteen. Now your anxieties are removed, and so the dialogue of hope and fear is most happily concluded. I defy you, be you ever so industrious, to find out any disagreeable circumstance attending this affair; there is nothing more now to be considered, my dear Countess,

Countess, than to support this rank which necessarily creates a greater expence than that of Captain. The Chevalier must be paid—how much? It is to be hoped that you will have leave to sell your fine company, the work of your own hands. In fine, good and evil are blended, honours increase expence; we are much displeased when they are not obtained, and we are much embarrassed when they are, such is the state of worldly affairs. Will not your colonel pay you a visit? I should think he would have time enough. I have a great mind to write to him, and superscribe his letter according to my fancy. You are, then, usually, a hundred at Grignan, and fourscore in the great intrenchments. I find they are not very scrupulous about burthening you. I approve of your not going to Lambesc to expose your beauty and Paulina's youth to the fury of the small-pox, this is an evil we cannot too much avoid. You have given me such a dreadful idea of the North-wind of Grignan during the winter, that it terrifies me. I imagine M. de Grignan will have much difficulty to resolve not to pass these three months at this good city of Aix; we must sometimes yield to impossibilities, but how disagreeable is this reflection! and it is a great misfortune to find one's self so exhausted, when it is so essentially necessary to be otherwise: these are very sensible objects, in regard to which, I wish you, as well as myself, all the requisite fortitude. The Chevalier will communicate some of his to you, he has so much, the use of which he is deprived of by the gout, that he has some to spare, and should furnish his friends with it. Never fail acquainting me with his and your designs. Madame de Chaulnes informs me, that she has received a
very

very pretty letter from you. Madame de Lavar-
din was under great affliction, M. de Chalons was
dying, and his pious mother * was overwhelmed
with grief at the foot of the cross. M. de Senlis †,
and all the Sanguins are very joyous; they have
obtained our little Abbey (*of Livri*), and they
have given up a Priory to be free of the pension.
It is so agreeable to them, that it seems nearer to
me, than if it had been given to another; they
are all our old neighbours.

My son is at length returned from
the States, and he is very well pleased to be
with us; Madame de Marbeuf is here for some
time, and the Abbé Quimperlé (*Charier*) who
thinks of nothing but serving me. We expect our
farmer, with whom we are to settle a long account
without any money. The Count d'Estrées ‡
supped and lay here last night, and is set out this
morning for Paris; I found him very agreeable
and lively; his mind is quite noble, and so greatly
turned to the sciences, and what are called the
belles-lettres, that if he had not acquired a very
good reputation both by sea and land (as the Che-
valier can inform you) I should imagine him one
of those, whose superior talents are so many ob-
stacles to their fortune; but he knows very well
how to make them coincide at the expence of his
rest, indeed, for he passes whole nights in reading;
this is too much. I wish our Marquis had only a

* Louisa Boyer, Duchess of Noailles, mother to Lewis An-
thony de Noailles, Bishop of Chalons upon Marne, afterwards
Archbishop of Paris and Cardinal.

† Denis Sanguin, Bishop of Senlis.

‡ Victor-Mary, Count, afterwards Duke d'Estrées, Vice-Ad-
miral and Marshal of France.

moiety of this disposition, it would be sufficient. It was a pleasure to hear him converse with my son, upon ancient and modern poets, history, philosophy, morality ; he is acquainted with every thing, no subject comes amiss to him ; this is very clever. The ignoramus's were quite non-plussed ; and the G's, with the Counts de R. and de R. and their good things, had nothing to say ; but we were very merry at their expence. Madame de Marbeuf pays you a thousand affectionate compliments ; and the Abbé Charier sends you ten thousand of the most respectable. Your M. d'Aix has an Abbey worth 6000 livres a year, which belonged to the Abbé de Soubise ; he will tell you it is worth twelve, but you may take off one half. I take my leave, my most amiable girl, your brother is disposed to write to you. Send me the chronicle of your health, this is the source of my repose, as you say the fountain of youth with me would be the spring of your's ; there is a thought which I think is worthy of your friendship.

LETTER



L E T T E R DCCXLIII.

Monsieur de Sévigné

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, November 20, 1689.

HERE I am, my pretty little sister, with our dear mamma, charmed to find her in perfect health, and charmed to find myself in repose at the Rocks, and out of the phrenzy of the States, and once more charmed to renew my correspondence with you. My mother has preserved all your letters, which have still to me the graces of novelty, so that it is only since yesterday, that I am acquainted with all that you have said concerning me. I shall neither compliment nor thank you for what you have wrote to my mother and me, as you know how sensible I am of the testimonies of your friendship. I had quite consoled myself upon not having the deputation, as soon as I perceived I had not been deserted by M. de Chaulnes, as I had imagined. You know that I always complain of crosses; those which have befallen me this year, were of such a kind, as it was impossible to foresee; for it is certain that out of the three powerful men in the province, there was not one who was not strenuously my friend, and whose interest was not connected with

mine with regard to the deputation; so that it was much more their business than mine to bring it to bear. M. de Chaulnes, Marshal d'Estrées, and M. de Lavardin, are equally opponents to M. de Seignelai, M. de Cavoie, and M. de Coetlogon; and they were all three disposed to deprive their antagonists of the satisfaction of appointing a deputy, and to have one of their own nomination. I was the only one they all three had in view, and it was, in fact, their design to appoint me. Marshal d'Estrées entertained hopes as long as he could; he at length received the mandate, which he so much dreaded, and which was nevertheless determined upon four months before, as I have been informed. You rightly think that having been thus with him, no disagreeable thing could happen to me during the sitting of the States, I tell you this in confidence, for it would not be proper to publish Marshal d'Estrée's earnest desire that M. de Seignelai and the friends of this minister should not succeed upon this occasion, though every one is acquainted with the misunderstanding that subsists between them. I am very happy to find that I shall soon be uncle to a Colonel, and perhaps very soon grand uncle, not indeed to an officer of such considerable rank; but I shall console myself hereupon, as this affront cannot be given without your sharing in it. Adieu, my pretty little sister, I am going to resume my usual lucubrations with my mother, in amusing her by reading of history, and taking care of her health; and I shall not, in your opinion, have much merit, for the short time she stays, considering how well she is at present.



L E T T E R DCCXLIV.

M adame de Sévigné

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, November 23, 1689.

HOW charmed I am, my dear child, that you have taken a little tour to Livri *! you have so often celebrated this festival there, that if you had met me there, you would not have thought any change had taken place, not even amongst those Sanguins, whom we have so often seen there, and who are now masters of it, and all our old furniture devolved from Abbés to Abbés, and which will long continue in the state you have seen them, for this Abbey is going to be settled as a patrimony in the family. You have charming weather, and it is the same here; we have a fine temperate sun. Madame de Marbeuf is compelled to walk, though she cannot do it like me. The Abbé Charier and I have been these two days settling with the farmer; he is a very honest man; but as his predecessor destroyed our estate, nothing but repairs and drawbacks stare us in the face, and I shall not touch a farthing of the thousand pistoles

* Madame de Grignan imagined she would be there upon St. Martin's day.

he owes me, as the produce has been these two years applied to replacing things properly; these are strange accounts; but let this console you, as it does me, things will be better for the future. I greatly approve of your having avoided Lambesc, whose air is infected with the small-pox, which is a thing the most carefully to be avoided. I shall not be surpris'd if the Chevalier with his complaints, to which the air of Paris is so fatal, should profit of the opportunity of passing a winter in your serene climate, as he finds himself there already; I am rather astonish'd, that finding himself better after using the waters of Balaruc, he did not insure the success of those baths, by the temperature of the climate, which affords relief to all gouty patients; so that I am very far from concluding that he intends to leave you alone.

I have received compliments from the Abbé Bigorre upon the Marquis's having obtained a regiment. I have just wrote to the young Colonel, and the composition of this letter certainly costs me less trouble than your answer to Madame de Vaudemont must have done you: if absence, joined to a still farther separation, has doubled and increased the pomp of your rank, you have much reason to be quite out of breath, to wipe your face, and cry *halt*, like M. de la Souche; but you would be the only one who had occasion to wipe your face, if they endeavour'd to understand you *: I am saying all this only in jest, for

* Madame de Sévigné ridicules here *en passant*, letters that are too elaborately written, too much studied, and therefore unnatural; what would she not have said, could she have foreseen the time when all the various styles furnished frequent examples of this very defect, and by endeavouring at wit and novelty, modern writers become unintelligible?

God always bestowed sufficient grace upon me to understand you perfectly well. You amuse yourself with building and finishing all your hotels that are so commodious and so different from those pompous ill-finished buildings; there is much more reason in what you are doing. You ask me what books we are reading; when we have the least company, reading is laid aside: but before the meeting of the States, we read some little books that scarce took us up a moment. *Mahomet II.* who took Constantinople from the last Emperor of the East; this is a great event, so singular, brilliant, and extraordinary, that we are carried away with it; and it happened but two hundred and thirty-six years ago. *The Conspiracy of Portugal*, which is very fine; the *Variations* of M. de Maux; a Vol. of *the History of the Church*, the second is too full of the detail of the Councils, and therefore might be tedious; *Iconoclastes* and the *Arianism* of Maimbourg; this author is detestable, his style is not agreeable, he is always desirous of being satirical, and compares Arius, a Princess, and a Courtier, to M. Arnauld, Madame de Longueville, and Treville: but setting aside these fooleries, the historical passages are so very fine, the Council of Nice so admirable, that one reads it with pleasure; and as he brings us down to Theodosius, we are going to find consolation for all our evils in the elegant style of M. de Flechier*. We run over other books, we have once more dipped into the *Abbadie*, and we shall resume it again with my son, who reads it to perfection; so, my dear child, the time glides away only too fast, and it is at present an object of great impor-

* Esprit Flechier, Bishop of Nismes, author of the Life of Theodosius.

tance to me. If I had found out that *spring of your repose* ; I never met with so pretty an expression ; if I had found it, I say, I should be a prodigal of time, as formerly. I am still more affected with that you have lost in losing the county ; I was in hopes it would have remained with you much longer ; this, as you say, was a *spring of justice* ; I wish it had depended upon the health of the present Pope, as nothing is talked of but the goodness of his constitution and his vivacity.

I have read at intervals the Life of the Duke d'Epemon, which has highly pleased me. You must tell me some news about Lambesc ; alas ! will not poor Madame du Janet be much afflicted ? why did not her husband remain peaceably with her ? what did he go to do in that *curst galley* ? the life of man is but a trifling affair, it is soon at an end ; in all these histories it passes so quick, and all go off younger than me ! *but no more of that*, the reflection is sufficient. My son and daughter, with Madame Marbeuf, desire to be remembered to you in the most friendly manner. The Abbé Charier sends you a thousand compliments. I am much obliged to this Abbé, he takes upon him all my business of Lower Brittany, which is no small affair, and which I could not have done at Paris ; and after all this, my child, I only ask the sensible joy of seeing you again, and embracing you most heartily.

LETTER



LETTER DCCXLV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, November 27, 1689.

I Have not received your letter ; these delays do not now make me uneasy, I am accustomed to the caprices of the post. I am quite of M. de Courtin's opinion, your presence would be very necessary at court for your son ; nothing is so certain, and this is one of the reasons that make us murmur against impossibilities ; this is the cause of all obstacles and confusion. Do you recollect, when we used sometimes to say, there is nothing so pernicious as the want of money ? we perfectly understood each other. But will not the little Colonel pay you a visit ? what can prevent him, after having returned thanks, and paid his court for a short time ? I expect to hear from you upon this subject, you can never dwell too much upon all that regards you, I have a real interest in it.

I should also be glad to hear some news from Lambesc, and how much M. d'Arles must have been humbled by the wooden arm upon his seat, and which did not seem to touch him ; I am always of the same opinion. I forgot on Wednesday to inclose a consolatory billet which I had

H 4

wrote

wrote to poor Madame de Janet. I have sent it to Paris, and you will receive it by the way of Poirier ; I find I have some feelings for Provence, which makes me believe I shall return thither one of these days. Madame de la Fayette acquaints me with the preparations she is making for her son's nuptials. She has turned her little chamber into a cabinet, she has given me an idea of it, give me your's ; I know not how either you or Paulina is dressed, if I were to see you pass, I should not know you.

We are reading the life of Theodosius, my son's manner increases its value ; it is absolutely the finest piece of writing I ever met with ; the style is admirable ; but such a book lasts us only two days ; I had read it, and yet it was new to me. I should be sorry, for instance, if Paulina had no taste for such a life ; romances should only be foils to such productions, otherwise they are pernicious. Madame de Marbeuf accommodates herself to our reading ; and we accommodate ourselves to her play, when there are performers : she is a worthy generous woman, who is capable of loving, and adores you. The Abbé Charrier is gone to make a tour to a living he has near Vitré, and he will soon return ; I really sometimes admire the goodness of Providence towards me ; he is so necessary for me in the business I have to transact in Lower Brittany, that if he were at present at Lyons, as he ought naturally to be, I know not what I should do.

Madame de Chaulnes has received a brief from her friend the Pope, conceived in the most obliging terms possible. Popes do not usually allow

allow that they are indebted for their exaltation to any one; but you will find that his present Holiness does not hesitate saying that he owes it to the Ambassador according to the King's intentions. I inclose you a copy of this brief; my son says it is ill translated, but the sense is good. The Abbé Bigorre has sent me the Holy Father's picture; I doubt not but he will send you one also; his countenance pronounces his longevity; if our country had been upon this life, it would have remained with us a considerable time: but that *charl* to die at the end of the first year! you, nevertheless, apply so happily that *source of all justice*, that I should think heaven had preserved it in store for you; but we are unacquainted with the secrets of that country; the only certainty is we must submit to them. Coulanges paid his compliments to the Pope in Italian, he was in the circle of the first audience, when the Ambassador was accompanied through the streets by fifty coaches and a great multitude of people; it was a very fine sight, and after having received from the Pope every kind of paternal goodness in public, he was shut up with his Holiness two hours in his closet; what passed is still a secret. Coulanges then paid his short compliment, the Holy Father answered with much good humour and very politely; he told him he had heard of Madame de Coulanges, and that she should come to Rome with Madame Chaulnes, this will not be forgot. A pretty girl repeated the other day at Rennes an *extravaganza*, which much resembled Madame de Coulanges's epigrams. You know M. de la Tremoille with his fine shape and ugly face, he was looking at another lady, with whom he seemed enamoured, and turned his back upon this; instead of being embarrassed, she

said with much sprightliness, *it is certainly me he is endeavouring to please*—is not this Madame de Coulanges to a hair? But such sallies are agreeable every where, when they flow naturally. These are trifles, indeed, my dear child, we might enter upon more solid subjects; but then they would be melancholy, and we are very distant from each other: you know how sensibly they affect me; this is enough for one day, though I answer nothing. Inform me what Field-Marshal sell their regiments for. Adieu, my dear amiable girl, tell me a little about you, be particular in the *Gazette* stile; for you have countries, alas! which were formerly much ravaged; give me some account of them, I cannot reflect upon those times without emotion, or returning thanks to God.



LETTER DCCXLVI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, November 30, 1689.

HOW greatly I am obliged to you for having sent me the letter of M. de S. Pouanges! It is a pleasure to see, that is literally see, such improvements in the wisdom and merit of our Marquis, formed purposely for this age; you are not forgot in it: I am charmed with having read this letter, and I return it you with a thousand thanks. For my part, I believe that you will

will be allowed to sell the Marquis's company, and I wait for this joyful event.

I always interest myself in what concerns the Chevalier; not because he amuses himself with reading and liking my letters; on the contrary, I take the liberty of laughing at him for this; but the reason is, because his head is very well turned, and agrees miraculously well with his heart; but whence comes it, as he is fond of this kind of reading, that he does not take the pleasure of reading your letters before you send them? They are very worthy of his esteem; when I shew them to my son and his wife, we feel the beauty of them. My friend Guébriac, the other day, met with the passage of La Montbrun; it greatly surpris'd him, it was a very lively, agreeable picture. In a word, daughter, it is a happiness for me that your letters please me, otherwise they would frequently be tiresome to you. M. de Grigna has not then lent me his assistance in that, where I spoke of the masterly stroke of having deprived the maker of Popes of the nomination of the Governor of Brittany. I am persuaded that the Chevalier and you both could not help being convinced of the truth of what I said: that blood which circulates so warmly in the Chevalier's veins, could not be frozen when the interests of great Lords and Provincial Governors came into play. I also hope that he has adopted my sentiments upon the ill-judged pride of the Archbishopric of Arles, for the Archbishop is out of the question; but I may, perhaps, vainly flatter myself upon these occasions: I should, nevertheless, be fond of that ingenuousness, if united to so many good things; and, were it in my favour,

I should much glory in it. Let us now enter upon his gout and fever, methinks they reign alternately, the gout turns to a fever, the fever to a gout; he may chuse; and I am of opinion, that the reigning power is always the most disagreeable; in a word, it is a great misfortune that such a man should be obliged to keep his bed.

You have, I find, been struck with Madame de la Fayette's expression blended with so much friendship*. Though I said to myself this truth should not be forgotten, I must acknowledge I was much astonished at it; for as yet I feel no kind of decay that makes me recollect it. I cannot, however, refrain from calculating and reflecting, and I find that the conditions of life are very hard. It seems to me that I have been dragged against my will to this fatal period, when *old age* must be endured; if it be visible, I have attained the goal; and I would, at least, contrive not to go beyond it, not to go forward in the road of infirmities, pains, and the want of memory, such *deformities* almost distract me; and yet I hear a voice which says, you must go on, in despite of yourself; or indeed, if you will not, you must die, which is an alternative nature recoils at. Such is, however, the fate of all those who are somewhat too far advanced: but returning to the will of God, and that universal law which is imposed upon us, our reason recovers itself, and makes us call in patience to our aid; summon it

* Madame de la Fayette told her in a letter of the 8th of October, 1688: "You are old, the Rocks are full of woods, catarrhs, and fluxions, which will overcome you; you weary yourself, and your mind will be soured, and your intellects decay."

also, my dearest child, and may your too affectionate friendship not excite you to shed those tears which reason condemns.

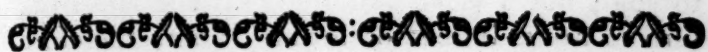
I was not much embarrassed to refuse the offers of my friends, I only answered them like you, *Paris is in Provence*, saying Paris is in Brittany; but it is somewhat extraordinary that you should feel it in the same manner as I did. Paris, then, is so far in Provence for me, that I would not be this year any where else but here. The thought of *passing the winter at the Rocks* is dreadful; alas! daughter, it is the pleasantest thing in the world, I sometimes laugh, and say; this is called passing a winter in the woods. Madame de Coulanges said to me the other day, leave your humid Rocks; I answered, you are *humid* yourself; it is Brévanes that is humid, but we are upon an eminence; it is as if you were to say, your humid Montmarte. The sun when it shines now penetrates on every side into these woods; it is a dry soil, which at noon is exactly beneath that planet, so that the most delicate constitution could not take cold; and the setting-sun has a fine effect from the end of a long alley: when it rains, a good room, and a good fire, warm two card tables: this is now the case, as we have a good deal of company, who no way incommode me, as I have my own way; when we have none, we are still better, as reading affords a pleasure superior to every other. Madame de Marbeuf is very good, she enters into all our tastes; but she will not be always with us. This idea I was willing to communicate to you, that your friendship might be at rest.

My

My daughter-in-law is charmed with what you say about her, I make no secret of it to her, and she returns you every kind of friendly acknowledgment, for the praises you bestow on her. M. Courtin's friendship for you claims many from me; he is a friend of consequence, and who is not afraid of speaking in your behalf; but this is not a very proper time to repeat favours and gratifications, when considerable augmentations are asked on every side. Tell me what pensions are retrenched, is it that of M. de Grignan, or Menin? If so, I shall be in despair. You are going to see M. du Pleffis, he writes to me, and makes me understand that his domestic plan does not succeed; and that instead of being at his ease and independent, as he hoped, he has thought of nothing but leaving his house; so that we may suppose him gone for two months with M. de Vins, into Provence: he will relate to you his grief; he seems to have been caught with respect to interest; I am very sorry for it; tell me what you learn from him. You certainly should send me M. de Grignan's speech, as he is satisfied with it; I shall be still more satisfied than him. Tell him how I summoned him to my aid, and upon what occasion. You spare me very much in your letters, I am sensible of it; you pass slightly over those parts that are troublesome, but I feel them equally as you do. It is a great consolation, that M. de Grignan is with you; he is the only person whom you could entrust with confidence, and the only one that could be more affected than yourself at what regards you; he knows how worthy I am to confer with him upon this subject: we are so strongly united in the same interest, that a natural union must
subsist.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 159

subsist. A thousand tender things to my dear Paulina, I have a very good opinion of her little vivacity, and her curtsies: you love her, you amuse yourself with her, which charms me; she answers your questions very pleasantly. My God! daughter, when will the time come for me to see you (how heartily shall I embrace you!) and also to see that little woman? I die with impatience.—I will give you an account of the first *coup-d'œil*.



L E T T E R DCCXLVII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, December 4, 1689.

I Thank you for your letter of the twenty-fourth of November, it breathes nothing but confidence and friendship, and instructs me in what I was willing to know. I told you that I shewed my son only such parts of my letters, as I chose he should see; truly this is amongst the number. We had here the other day some sensible people, who upon seeing in the *Paris a-la-main*, what relates to your son's regiment, were all immediately of opinion that this young Colonel would be no very great charge to his father and mother; and that his two uncles, who were such mighty Lords, would certainly support him. I could not help laughing in my sleeve, and left them to think as they

they pleased. As to the Chevalier, you cannot surprise me in telling me of his friendship and goodness, they are admirable; it is him, I find, that waits to furnish you with the means of paying him, it is an uncommon term; but the difficulty consists in finding the money, though the security is good. Why could not M. de la Garde procure you this trifling sum? I would have every one exert himself, finding they are so backward. Would to God I were possessed of another small transferable sum!—methinks I should soon send it to you; but I have nothing but vile lands that turn to stones instead of bread. I am, therefore, only fit to talk, and find fault with what is amiss, pity you, and sensibly feel your misfortunes; as for the rest, alas! you see it, *and yet you see nothing, nor me neither.* I conjure you to let me know the sequel of these important and urgent matters; be not afraid of afflicting me, I am more afflicted when I am so alone, and only acquainted with things in the lump. Your assembly, I find, is to sit only a fortnight, and our States three weeks: their sittings will hereafter be still shorter, for the only object now is the free-gift. M. d'Ales ought to be very well pleased, that M. d'Aix has resigned his place to him; must this be called pride? It is, however, a species of it that highly gratifies the Archbishop of Aix; these two haughty Bishops, one of whom remains in the other's absence, agree very well together. If M. d'Arles thinks he has caught M. d'Aix, he is always sure of confounding his enemies upon those terms. I know not whether I shall be in a humour to write to M. d'Aix upon this Abbey, it is not superior to my compliment. Acquaint me with all that follows upon this head, and when you

you have found money to pay the Chevalier out of his own estate—how easy it is to comprehend this! I am not over pleased with the wife La Garde, I do not find that generosity and gratitude are virtues he much practises; I wish they had their rotation as well as others. Let me know when you will have leave to sell the Marquis's company.

But are you not too good to form Paulina's mind, and be her dancing-master? You are preferable to Désairs, she need only look at you, and imitate you. Is she tall? is she graceful? I thank her for not having confounded me with all her other grandmothers, whom she hates; I am saved, thank God! I am fond of the regimen and preservation which she takes, according to her confessor's prescription, against the *Pastor Fido*, it is just like the rhubarb and marmalade that I saw Pomponne, Madame de Pomponne, take before dinner; but she afterwards eat champignons and sallad: adieu to the marmalade, my dear Paulina, you are to make the application. But do you not adore your dear and amiable mamma? Do you not find yourself too happy in seeing her, to look at her, listen to her, and hear her? Each of these words has its degrees. I know not, my dear, where either M. de Grignan, you, or the Chevalier is: you mentioned to me a journey to Lambesc, the air of the small-pox always displeases me. Pay my compliments as you can; accept those of my son; his wife will not write to you till such time as you have obtained leave to sell your company.—She has an eye to the main chance: she is charmed with your friendship and approbation. Madame de Mar-

beuf

beuf is still here, and the Abbé Charier; this company is just what is agreeable to us: they pay you a hundred thousand compliments. This fine weather we walk; I wear your cloak, which I am fond of; it does me both honour and profit; it is admired and praised; I say it is *a present from my daughter*. Do not imagine that I am in an obscure solitary wood, with an owl's-hood upon my head; this is not the plan: nothing passes so insensibly as a winter in the country, it shocks only at a distance. My health is always very good, give me a circumstantial account of your's.



LETTER DCCXLVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, December 7, 1689.

I Have already told you, my dear child, that when one is once settled in the country, the months of November and December are not difficult to get over. Nevertheless, your North wind greatly terrifies me, we have no tempests of this kind here. I would not have you lose any of the good company that is now with you, and I could wish that if the Chevalier's health should not be restored this winter, he would rather pass it with you than in his little chamber at Paris; this would afford consolation both to him and you. So then, I find you are resolved

resolved to pass the winter at Grignan, leaving the game to M. d'Aix, and setting forth the reasons which prevent your keeping your court at Aix for three or four months, as was customary with M. de Grignan. But do you not hope to see your son this winter? I cannot imagine that any thing can prevent his going to Grignan. My son and I were the other day admiring how happily you had pushed him forward in life, in order to fix him in that station that was proper for him, the command of his uncle's regiment; all this has been very well brought to bear, and M. de Grignan has crowned all in having sent him to make the first campaign of Philipburgh, which cost you so many tears. The Academy, the Musqueteers, or even the company of light-horse, could not have advanced him so much as these three sieges with the Dauphin, and that confusion so prettily and so coolly received: in fine, our utmost wishes have been hitherto accomplished, may God support and conduct the rest.

Madame de Vins has wrote to me about the regiment, she testifies the strongest friendship upon the occasion: she acquaints me that M. de Vins has taken M. du Pleffis with him, this I knew, and informed you of; you will see and he will acquaint you with his uneasiness. One may easily see that the poor man has been imposed upon, it is a pity, but marriage should not be entered upon with so little consideration. The weather has been dreadful for these six days past. There are two card-tables in my apartment at the hour I mention to you, at which Madame de Marbeuf, the Abbé Charier, and others assist: this is very well; when they are gone we shall resume our
books

books with pleasure. My health always continues very well, you talk very superficially of yours; how are your low spirits, your fides, your cholic? in a word all your person, are you handsome? for this determines the whole.



LETTER DCCLIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, December 11, 1689.

I Begin by exclaiming against the *sixth-denier*, I have never heard it mentioned since the loan of the Miser in Moliere's Comedy. I imagine you intended saying six and a half per Cent. which is the *denier* I have heard mentioned in Provence; this I imagine amounts to the sixteenth denier, but the sixth-denier is so usurious, that I do not think any notary would draw up a contract upon such terms: this is paying one thousand six hundred sixty-six livres thirteen sols for ten thousand livres; which is not at all in the usual course of loans; in a word, I stand in need of an *eclaircissement* upon this head, for I cannot believe this first account you give me. I agree with you in regard to the reasons that urge you more than all the bailiffs in Christendom to pay the Chevalier, not only in part but the two thousand pistoles*; nothing can be more just; I entirely coincide with you upon this head.

* That is to say the price of the regiment.

I laugh

I laugh with you at the pleasantry of our thoughts, with regard to the little Abbey. Such a similar turn of fancy seldom occurs; you will call it childish weakness, or whatever you please: but it is certain that these Sanguins, this Villeneuve, the idea of old Pavin *, those ancient acquaintances are so confounded with our garden and forest, that they appear to me like the same thing, and not only as if we had lent it them, but as if it were still our's, as we are sure of finding our goods there, and the same people we so frequently saw there. In fine, my child, we were worthy of Livri by the taste that we had for it, and which we still have for that pretty retreat.

You praise me too much for the gentle recluse life I pass here, nothing gives me pain but your absence. If it be necessary to heighten the value of this retreat, to give courage to certain people, I consent; but otherwise, you forget that Paris is in Provence for me, that every thing is equal to me, that I could not pass my time better, and that I do not deserve praise for my journey hither; but for that when I left you at Paris, and which good breeding, maternal care, and the last commands of the good Abbé to restore to my son the lands I had enjoyed, compelled me to take five or six years ago; it was this that gave me real affliction, because I left you; for

* Denis Sanguin de Saint-Pavin, one of the most agreeable poets of his time, died in 1670. There is a letter of his in rhyme to Madame de Sévigné in the *collection of the finest pieces of the French poets, ancient and modern*, 5 vols. 12mo. Paris, printed for Barbin in 1692. This letter begins with these words, *Paris, at your hands justice doth require, &c.* p. 366. vol. IV.

which I was deservedly punished by a narrow escape from being drowned, and a sore leg. At present, my belle, all I pay for it is sleep, that is to say slumbers, for I have always my house and little household at Paris, and am at some expence here; but all this is so middling, that I find means to remit some money, which eases my mind, and calls into play those charming virtues, which you so highly extol. When I have regulated, as I hope to do, my affairs in Brittany, I shall think of nothing but going to meet you; I shall pass through Paris, which is the theatre of nations, and perhaps by that time you will think of coming thither. In fine, we shall see what providence ordains concerning our designs, this journey can be only in perspective till the autumn of ninety. As to the journey of my son and his wife to Bourbon, it seems to me like a vision. This, my dear child, is all I can say to you to-day.

The little Colonel has wrote to me, to his uncle, and his *cousin*, to acquaint us with his promotion. He had not yet received our complimentary letter. He acknowledges he is charmed at finding himself at the head of such a handsome troop, and to be able to say *my regiment*; this is somewhat juvenile, but consider he is only eighteen; he relates to us the manner in which he has passed his latter years; I would send you this letter, were I not fond of it. It seems that you have more apprehensions at the thought of a Colonel's *rib*, than you had at that of a Captain of cavalry: you carry your tenderness too far, my dear Countess, I have more courage than you have, and I would have him be a married Colonel, even were he to be a father by the end

of

of the first year: this, indeed, would charm me. We should accustom ourselves to think of the worst that can happen; there are in your letters some passages so affectionate and natural, that they touch me very sensibly, and inspire me with a tenderness, that is not easy to describe; we should say, as you do sometimes, *God knows*.

I have spoke to you of Madame de Coulanges, but what you say is more to the purpose. It is true that this son of Madame de Coulanges admits of some indulgence; she will turn this new friend (Alexander VIII.) to whatever she pleases, and he will for some time be the *best figure in her whole groupe*, but I return your own words; *She is my friend, you know it well; you will not betray me*. Madame de la Fayette acquaints me that Madame de Coulanges is quite in a good road, and that she will endeavour to get into one also, as soon as her son is married. Tell me, my dear Countess, how you contrive to pass the winter in your castle, upon that mountain, with such hurricanes they make one tremble. M. de Grignan will greatly regret the loss of Madame d'Oppede's sweet company. For my part, I am almost lifeless, dust to dust in these woods: I sometimes keep my room a whole week; I never think of going out when it rains; when it is fine, it is perfect summer, by reason of the goodness of the soil; for these two days past the sun has been very warm, and has shone every where; it is very mild; this is the weather that I walk; at length you will approve of my conduct: this is all that can be said, we have for these three weeks past had some very agreeable company, I mean the Abbé Charier and Madame de Marbeuf. They leave

us to-morrow, they repeat a thousand and a thousand compliments to you ; I could have wished that you had answered the first, but you did not think they would have staid here so long. Play enlivens a house ; I fear that your's has cost you some money, as well as M. de Grignan, as I know your ill-luck.

I have been much surpris'd that your province should have increased so considerably their present to the King : when M. de Grignan entered upon his post, they gave only one hundred thousand crowns, and they have given five hundred thousand crowns after the first year. We have received an edict from Paris concerning the tontine. His Majesty, the Dauphin, and MONSIEUR, have sent all their silver moveables to the mint, which will produce many millions, and furnish money, which was much wanted. You calculate in your disorder, daughter, and you estimate a subject on various sides ; this shews a spice of solid understanding ; it is always much better to know what one is doing, than to live blindfolded, deaf and mute ; à-propos of deaf, I intreat you to make the Chevalier dread as much as I do this kind of family disorder. A-propos again of family, M. de Lamoignon has obtained the reversion of M. de Nemond's post, it belonged to the late first President ; the King has wrought this miracle ; for *William* thought that the word *reversion* would kill him. I am charmed that our neighbour * has at length got this place,

* Christian Francis de Lamoignon, son to William de Lamoignon, first President of the Parliament of Paris, was Advocate-general, and afterwards President à Mortier to the Parliament of Paris.

and will not die in his former post. Your son is in a strange place, *Kaisers-Lautern* *; if it were a word of the Breton-tongue, it could not be worse. He tells us he is going to set about reading; he is in the right, for it is a shocking thing to be ignorant; since he loves war, he should as naturally love the histories that treat of it; advise him to employ his time usefully whilst he remains in that strange city: but will he not come to see you? I should be as much surprised as you to see him once more a firebrand with the tone of a commander, *God preserve him*.

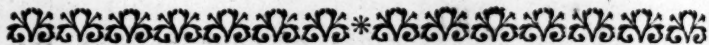
Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

I am quite of your opinion, my dear little sister; I assure you, I have no more thoughts about the deputation, since to obtain it, I must become once more a courtier or a warrior. It was not properly settled, that in order to attain this dignity, one of these qualities was absolutely necessary; and the moment I found it was, I thought of nothing but retiring from the post to which I had been appointed, and I return better pleased than ever with my retreat; but I do not give up the pleasure of paying you a visit, which I more impatiently wish for than I can express. Madame de Mauron † speaks of a journey to Bourbon, as a thing she has resolved upon, and proposes taking her daughter and me with her: this journey does not yet form any part of my mother's plan; we shall see the dispositions of providence concerning it as well as our's. I am very

* A valley in Germany in the Lower Palatinate, upon the small river *Lauter*. This is also called *Caselaüter*.

† Mother-in-law to M. de Sévigné.

well pleased that you are satisfied with your sister-in-law; I can assure you I envied very much the pleasure she had of keeping company with my mother, which I should have preferred far beyond the furious diversities of the States. We have paid our compliments to the new Colonel, who has also wrote to us very prettily, to acquaint us with his new dignity; he seems quite full of it, as a young man like him must naturally be. God knows how heartily I wish him prosperity; I wish it as much as I do health to his father, whom I embrace most tenderly, and also you, my lovely little sister.



L E T T E R • DCCL.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, December 14, 1689.

IF the Chevalier read your letters, he would not seek for amusement in those that come so far. What you told me the other day concerning Livri, which we have lent to M. Sanguin, allowing him even to make a fountain there; I say this whole passage, that concerning Madame de Coulanges, and all your friendly expressions, are animated and agreeable. I admire the liveliness of your style in the midst of so many thorny, perplexing, suffocating matters; really, my dear child, all the admiration is due to you and not to me; I am only like a violet, easy to be concealed, I hold no place nor rank upon earth,

earth, except in your heart, which I esteem more than all the rest, and in those of my friends. My task is the easiest in the world ; but for you, in the rank you hold, in the most brilliant and most agreeable province in France, to unite œconomy with the magnificence of a Governor, is scarce to be imagined, which I cannot believe will last long, considering particularly your son's expence, which every day increases. As these thoughts often interrupt my quiet, I fear that you being nearer the abyss, are still more subject to these disagreeable reflexions ; this, my dear Countess, is the true cause of my anxiety ; for as to solitude it does not in the least make me gloomy. Our good agreeable company are gone ; I have at the same time driven away my son and his wife, the first is gone to his aunt's, the other upon a pressing visit ; I have sent them both forth their different roads, which greatly pleases me : we shall meet again in two days, when we shall be still more pleased to see one another : I am not indeed alone, for I am beloved in this country ; I had a visit yesterday from two very social men, both *Molinists*, I was not at all tired with them ; I have books, workmen, fine weather ; if my dear daughter were less afflicted, with the hopes of seeing her again, what could I be in want of ?

I have wrote to the Marquis, although I had before paid him my compliments : I intreat him to read in that gloomy garrison, where he can do nothing else ; I tell him that since he is fond of war, it is somewhat monstrous to have no inclination to see those books which treat upon it, and to be acquainted with those persons, who excelled in those arts : I scold him, I tor-

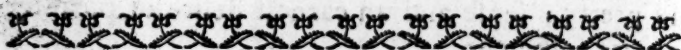
ment him, and I hope we shall work a reformation: this will be the first door he ever refused opening to us. I am not so uneasy at his being a little inclined to sleep, knowing he will never be wanting in what affects his glory, as I am at his being fond of play. I make him perceive that this will be his ruin; if he plays but little, he can lose but little; but a small rain wets a great deal; if he plays often he will find himself deceived, he must pay, and if he has no money, he must either forfeit his word, or break in upon his necessary expences. One is unlucky too through ignorance, for without being cheated, it often happens that we lose. In a word, daughter, it would be a very bad thing both for him and you, who would feel the effects. The Marquis would, therefore, be very happy to have a taste for reading, like Paulina, who is charmed with knowledge and instruction. What a happy, agreeable disposition! this sets one above idleness, and prevents the time appearing tedious, which are terrific monsters. Romances are easily gone thro', I could wish that Paulina had some order in the choice of histories, that she began at one end, and ended at the other, that she might be capable of taking a slight but general tincture of every thing. Do you say nothing to her about geography? we will resume this conversation another time. D'Avila * is admirable, but we like him the better when we are a little acquainted with what leads to that period, such as Lewis XII. Francis I. and others. It is your part, daughter,

* Author of an history of the Civil Wars of France, which contains all the memorable events from the death of Henry II. in 1559, to the peace of Virvins in 1598.

to govern and rectify ; it is your duty, you know it. As to other things, I do not doubt that in a very short time you will make her very amiable and pretty ; sense and an earnest desire of pleasing you are sufficient.

You tell me you expect M. de Vins to dinner ; had you not been advertised, you would have been much surpris'd to see M. du Plessis behind him ; he will relate his grievances to you, he has told them in part, and made me hope for the remainder. He seems to me cheated and duped, with regard to the fortune, and he has so great an inclination to be rid of his *Dorimena*, that I might guess at the other part, though he has assured me her honour is no way concerned ; please God it may be so. This is nevertheless very foolish ; for there are things which should be done seriously and with prudence, as for instance, that of taking a wife. M. de la Fayette was married the day before yesterday (Monday 12) and was to return to dinner at his mother's, and lie at M. de Marillac's ; supposing then, that there is a young Countess de la Fayette, you may reflect that you will hear your son say, I have danced a whole night with Madame de la Fayette, which must greatly surprize you ; this young Countess is very lively, and the Marquis is among the foremost of her friends. Our's approves, and is willing to imitate every thing the Chevalier does ; she loves and esteems him ; but the Chevalier's shocking gout renders him glorious, and almost insensible to all my friend's advances. Here is a good deal of chat, my dear belle, but I know you will

have it, and that you are not sorry for having diverted me this afternoon.



L E T T E R D C C L I .

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, December 18, 1689.

NOBLE Lady, have I not done well to send you Madame de Chaulnes's apostolic-pullet of the holy father? You observe to me, that he makes not the least mention of the Holy Ghost in the Pope's elections; I had only remarked the sincere avowal he makes of being indebted to France and the Ambassador for his election; this alone, added to the praises and friendship with which he honours our Duchefs, appeared to me worthy of attention. As for the Holy Ghost, I do not believe it is offended with being so little celebrated in the Conclave; he knows very well, and so do we, that it always makes them; yes surely, we the disciples of Providence, are not to be deceived, and we know by how many paths, by how many hands, and how many wills, he constantly performs what it resolves upon. I have a very good opinion of the letter you are writing to M. Selletier, without being acquainted with either the particulars or the subject; and I am persuaded that you make a very good one of this Holy Ghost, which has deprived you of the county. Your son appears
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to me an officer of great consequence; his post may very well excite envy, and surpasses what you could have expected at his present age; all the measures were so just and so well taken, that there has not been a moment lost; no crosses but all the circumstances agreeable; in a word, my dear, if you are not contented, I know not what will please you, and this company which you are going to sell, methinks, crowns the whole. I find that the Marquis will remain some time at Keiserslauter; these winter wars are sometimes productive of as much as campaigns; we make ourselves spoken of: the neighbourhood of Mentz is a post of trust, you wrote in this sense, since you have some scruples about the courage which you display by your fire-side; it is by being with the Chevalier that you have gained this martial humour; I have a lively idea of the poor man with his arms across, as well as of that lion with which you made your court so well to the Prince; he has also his paws crossed, but I am persuaded that, in such a situation, passing a winter in Provence, under your fine sun, will do him all possible good. I know, at least, that those he last passed at Paris were very disagreeable. We have no reason to complain of the present thus far; there has been no snow, no frost, but a fine sun: I walk every day, the woods are still very pleasant, and every thing is so well planted and ranged, that it seems as if the leaves had fallen that the sun might shine through all the walks, and that we might enjoy our rambles. I sung the other day,

Pour qui, cruel Hiver, gardes-tu tes rigueurs?

For whom, cruel winter, preservest thou thy rigour?

have it, and that you are not sorry for having diverted me this afternoon.



LETTER DCCLI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, December 18, 1689.

NOBLE Lady, have I not done well to send you Madame de Chaulnes's apostolic-pullet of the holy father? You observe to me, that he makes not the least mention of the Holy Ghost in the Pope's elections; I had only remarked the sincere avowal he makes of being indebted to France and the Ambassador for his election; this alone, added to the praises and friendship with which he honours our Duchefs, appeared to me worthy of attention. As for the Holy Ghost, I do not believe it is offended with being so little celebrated in the Conclave; he knows very well, and so do we, that it always makes them; yes surely, we the disciples of Providence, are not to be deceived, and we know by how many paths, by how many hands, and how many wills, he constantly performs what it resolves upon. I have a very good opinion of the letter you are writing to M. Selletier, without being acquainted with either the particulars or the subject; and I am persuaded that you make a very good one of this Holy Ghost, which has deprived you of the county. Your son appears
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to me an officer of great consequence; his post may very well excite envy, and surpasses what you could have expected at his present age; all the measures were so just and so well taken, that there has not been a moment lost; no crosses but all the circumstances agreeable; in a word, my dear, if you are not contented, I know not what will please you, and this company which you are going to sell, methinks, crowns the whole. I find that the Marquis will remain some time at Keiserslauter; these winter wars are sometimes productive of as much as campaigns; we make ourselves spoken of: the neighbourhood of Mentz is a post of trust, you wrote in this sense, since you have some scruples about the courage which you display by your fire-side; it is by being with the Chevalier that you have gained this martial humour; I have a lively idea of the poor man with his arms across, as well as of that lion with which you made your court so well to the Prince; he has also his paws crossed, but I am persuaded that, in such a situation, passing a winter in Provence, under your fine sun, will do him all possible good. I know, at least, that those he last passed at Paris were very disagreeable. We have no reason to complain of the present thus far; there has been no snow, no frost, but a fine sun: I walk every day, the woods are still very pleasant, and every thing is so well planted and ranged, that it seems as if the leaves had fallen that the sun might shine through all the walks, and that we might enjoy our rambles. I sung the other day,

Pour qui, cruel Hiver, gardes-tu tes rigueurs?

For whom, cruel winter, preservest thou thy rigour?

I was charmed to find that it was not for you ; but let us wait the conclusion, for you know from the extremity of the horizon there may come the most dreadful child of the North ; you are but too well acquainted with him, he has committed dreadful devastation upon you ; but, however, in the name of Boreas, continue to enjoy his absence, this is so much gain. You have depicted to me, at the end of a walk, a sleepy debauch which has much pleased me ; for considering the number of thoughts liable to agitate you, I am always afraid of your being awake at four in the morning, as I have known you sometimes ; such warm blood would but ill agree with Provence ; I cannot recommend too strongly to you the care of your health, if you esteem mine, which is always very good. I imagined that M. du Pleffis would surprise you behind M. de Vins ; here I expected you would be caught ; but to be fresh shaved with large dirty boots is a ridiculous contrast. He has wrote to me from Grignan, and is delighted with your goodness, your splendor, and the charms of your little Paulina. What harmony there is throughout her person ! what an expressive countenance ! how becoming her vivacity ! what fine blue eyes, with black eye-lashes ; for my part, I think she must be striking or attracting, I know not very well which, I beg you will inform me.

What say you to the example the King sets of melting down his fine plate ? our Duchefs de Lude is quite in despair, she has sent her's ; Madame de Chaulnes her table and her candlestick-stands, and Madame de Lavardin the
plate

plate that is returned from Rome, being persuaded that her husband will not return thither again : See if you have any thing to do upon this occasion. I send you a letter from M. du Pleffis, in order to settle your opinion; do not appear to have seen it, nor mention it to him; but confine your censures to deceit and mercenary views, but avoid touching the *cow* or the *calf*. I sincerely pity the poor man, it is a very dangerous disorder to be given to matrimony, *I had rather drink*. I could not comprehend why my letter to Madame de Janet should find its way back; the reason is admirable; I will keep it for the first time her husband dies, for I can say nothing else upon the occasion. You scold me for taking what you say too seriously; yet, who could doubt that a man in Provence where you are, could be so well, when you assure me he is dead? I shall be more careful for the future. I have corrected you, at least, with regard to the commissions. I prepare them in a moment, and this is not like poor Janet's case, where there is only a letter lost. My dear child, I recommend you to take care of yourself, at these critical times, repose yourself, if you love me. My son and his wife are both returned from their jaunts; they appear so well pleased to find me here, that I pity them for having left me. My daughter-in-law has got the head-ache; she was overturned in her little journey, and received some bruises, and two of her fine mares, which were taken off, are strayed, and no tidings are yet received of them: my son is very uneasy upon the occasion. They will write to you on Wednesday.



L E T T E R DCCLII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, December 21, 1689.

I Resume my discourse where I left off on Sunday. The pretty little mares ran away, without stopping for a considerable time, just like youth when they have a loose rein. At last one was found at Vitré, the other in a farm: the people at Vitré went to see this little creature at night, quite heated, completely harnessed, and wanted to gain some intelligence of her concerning my son. Do you recollect the circumstance of Rinaldo's horse, which Orlando found running with his harness without his master? How great was his affliction! he knew not of whom to enquire; at length, he thus addressed himself to the horse: *Dimmi caval gentil, che di Rinaldo, il tuo caro signore, ch'è divenuto.* I know not very well what Rubicano answered; but I assure you that the two little animals are very frolicksome in the stable, to the great satisfaction *del caro Signore.*

Monsieur DE SEVIGNE'.

It is very true that I received great satisfaction from these two little mares being in good health in the stable; and still more from your sister-in-law having quite recovered from her fall, after

after having her head greatly disturbed for two days: such little accidents are useful, to make us know the value of being relieved from them. I think, my very pretty little sister, that you are not sufficiently moved with the king's goodness, in allowing you to sell your company. Here is your son promoted to the rank of a Colonel, without its costing you scarce any thing; he will have good winter-quarters, both as Captain and Colonel, till such time as he meets with somebody disposed to give him 12,000 livres. This is all, I think, that you could have wished for upon the occasion. But what could you desire more favourable for Paulina, than to see her honourably settled at your estate of Avignon with a lover who adores her, and who was the first that sung her praises, and made her name known in foreign countries? Adieu, my charming little sister.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE', daughter-in-law.

I swear to you, my dear sister, that I will never leave Madame de Sévigné again; I break down, I am over-turned, my head is broke, as soon as I desert her protection: but I am far more sensible of the good fortune of my pretty *Cousin*, than my own little misfortunes. I wish Paulina days spun with gold and silk, but with another than her lover of Rome.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE' continues.

Coulanges has wrote me a long and very pretty letter, he must have written to you at the same time. He has sent me some couplets, which I honour; for he there intro-

duces all those glorious periods of Rome, which I also honour; he is gay, contented, and the favourite of M. de Turenne *. How doth this name agree with you? He is enamoured with Paulina, he is requesting the Pope's leave to marry her, and intreats his holiness to give him Avignon, which he is willing to restore to your family; she will be called the Countess d'Avignon. If he says that old age surrounds him, he doubts of some things by reason of certain circulations; but he avers that he is not sensible of it, either mentally or corporeally; and I, in turn, assure you that I feel myself nearly in his situation, and that I do myself justice only by reflection. I am more uneasy about your health than my own. How comes it, my dear child, that you are troubled with cholics, which compel you to keep your bed? You were not so ill at Paris; would not those waters which Paulina took this summer be serviceable to you? I have heard at Bourdelot, that the waters of Forges, with cooling cathartics, are infinitely beyond hot medicines, which thicken the blood, and add fuel to fire. These reflections you will, perhaps, laugh at; but consider them, you that reason better than all the faculty: take coffee also into consideration, do you think it pernicious? This is dictated by my friendship, and ignorance, founded only in experience.

I am very glad that you will have the Chevalier's company this winter, you stand in need of this consolation. It is not because

* Lewis de la Tour, Prince of Turenne, died the 4th of August, 1692, of the wounds he had received the preceeding day in the battle of Steinkirk. He was at Rome in 1689.

he sees my letters, this is a distempered taste; it is not that I may pay my court to him; but he has applied the hundred thousand livres exactly in the manner he ought; it was the design of the founders to afford him the means of pushing his fortune, and to turn to account his military taste. He has fulfilled all his duty in this respect; and, with regard to reputation, beyond what could have been wished: I say this without intending to displease him; he has found as much money as he had dissipated, and yet far less than what he deserved; but he would not even have remained here, if God had not stopped him short in his career; and it is his melancholy fate, that the Marquis should be pitied for; for had it been allowed its full swing, our son would have required no other assistance; but we must return to God, and submit ourselves, and have that self-denial which you have.

I ask you a thousand pardons, Chevalier, for what I have taken the liberty of saying; why do you read my letters? *Do I speak to you?*

What say you to all that fine plate of the Duchess du Lude, and that of many others, which is following the King's to the Mint. The King's apartments have thrown three millions into trade, which altogether must make a great circulation. Madame de Chaulnes has sent her tables, with her two candlestick-stands, and her fine gilt toilet. The Abbé Bigorre has sent me the edict, with the increase in the value of money; this is what will enrich you, supposing your coffers are full. I have just wrote to M. de Lamignon, I was willing to practise this chicane, and

and content myself with a compliment, but I have repented.

As to our lectures, they are delightful. We read *Abbadie* *, and the History of the Church, this is harmonizing the lute with the voice. You are not fond of wagers, I know not how we can captivate you here a winter. You are flighty, and not fond of history, and we have no pleasure, but when we are engaged in reading, and make it a point. Sometimes, to divert ourselves, we read the little Letters of Pascal; good heaven how delightful! and how my son reads them! I incessantly think of my daughter, and how much this extreme propriety and reasoning is worthy of her; but your brother says, you find it always the same thing: thank God, so much the better; can there be a more perfect style, a more delicate, or more natural ~~raillery~~, a more worthy daughter of the dialogues of Plato, which are so fine? And when after the ten first letters, he addresses himself to the R. P's, how serious! how solid! how forcible! what eloquence! what a love of God, and truth! what a manner of supporting it, and of making it understood; all this is to be met with in the eight last letters, which are very different from the former. I am persuaded you never did more than glance over them, devouring the pleasant passages; but this is not the case when they are read deliberately. Tell me whether the Marquis will not have good winter-quarters, this will be a consolation. I do not think that the Chevalier has quite deserted this re-

* Author of the Truth of the Christian Religion.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 183
giment, or that M. de Montégut has laid aside
his salutary advice to the young Colonel.



L E T T E R DCCLIII.

To the same.

*The Rocks, Saturday, for Sunday being Christmas-
day.*

I Wish you the seasonable compliments, and that you may be more just towards me next year, than you have been at the close of this. Now would you have me guess at M. de la Garde's situation, unless you acquaint me with it? It is only three days since I have been informed he no longer enjoys the pension of 8000 livres; I told you it astonished and surprised me. To this advice you now add, that his estate which usually produced 10,000 livres, now brings him in only 2000; this makes a very great difference. How could I conceive any such drawback, when I always saw the Chevalier remit him such considerable sums upon the score of his pension? I did not know they were diminished; I was of opinion his estate was worth ten thousand livres a year, lumping it all together, and I say, considering the little expence he makes, he was a very rich man, quite at his ease; he might, therefore, very easily have lent my daughter some money to pay her friend the Chevalier de Grignan: this thought was neither unjust nor ridiculous, when one did not
I know

know what had happened to this poor man. This is the medium through which things appeared to me, having a good opinion of your lands in Provence, in comparison of ours. I must have been both foolish and injustice itself, to have told you what you reproach me with, if I had known what I learn only by your two last letters ; they, indeed, have very much changed my opinion ; I am now only affected with the real part I take in such afflicting circumstances, and the admiration which so much courage and such resignation to the will of God deserve. You paint a real saint, the most christian virtue, which greatly increases the esteem I always entertained for him. Never was there such amiable devotion as his, and if I am one day happy enough to see him, I shall have a very sensible joy ; but once more how could I guess ? you had even represented him so uneasy as to want to sell his estate ; in fine, I should have been more worthy of being scolded than can be expressed, if I had wrote as I did, after knowing what you have just now acquainted me with. You had not settled your dates regularly, you imagined the feathered messengers had been the couriers to your last letters, or you forgot how distant we were from each other. Do me therefore some justice, and believe that I would not have done so much wrong to M. de la Garde's virtue and situation. I profit of this opportunity to wish him the festive compliments, and to assure him most sincerely of my ancient friendship ; it is a long while since I said any thing particular to him. I think you happy to afford him consolation in his retreat, as he does you reciprocally. I imagined he was almost always at la Garde ; I can easily imagine his company is agreeable ; but when you
tell

tell me that you like bad company rather than none, and that you wish your castle were full, you are quite unintelligible.

The account you give me of the Chevalier's gout greatly excites my pity. The waters of Balaruc have, then, afforded him no relief? this is very melancholy; I wish him a part of M. de la Garde's resignation: tell him how much I am afflicted at his condition. Acquaint me with the state of your health, I touched too lightly upon that cholic which made you keep your bed; is this the cholic that does not terrify, though it be painful? Coulanges has wrote to me the same extravagances as he hath to you, and I have approved that, upon his marrying Paulina, he should restore to your family that fine estate of Avignon, which you have so long possessed; how agreeable it would have been to you for eight or ten years. It is said the Pope wants the King publickly to notify that he disavows the assembly of eighty-two, at which two Grignans assisted, and where infallibility was mentioned; this would be a strange affair. This news does not come from the Abbé Bigorre; I wait impatiently for his letters. The hotel of Rochefoucauld is half burnt down, the grand apartment, with many goods and papers are destroyed. Madame de Lavardin is much afflicted at the accident, and she also tells me that Madame Fayette is seized with such a violent cholic and pain in her side, that she is greatly to be pitied; her health is in a very deplorable state. I take M. de la Trousse's to be very bad, let people say what they please.

I salute

I salute and embrace M. de Grignan ; it is a long while since I saw him. He did not owe less than a visit to his *Alcina* in her enchanted castle ; I wish ~~she~~ ^{he} may pass the winter there, that he may have no chagrin at Aix. We are alone here with charming books, which we read, and which afford us so much pleasure, that I cannot help pitying your want of taste for reading ; for I must inform you, my dearest girl, that you are not fond of reading, and that your son inherits this distaste from you : I tell you this to avenge what you said to me.

When your son goes to Paris and Versailles, he will salute the King, all the ministers, and the whole court. Whatever esteem I entertain for him, I could wish him an uncle only this first winter ; I praise him for his docility ; he has wrote to us very prettily upon that happiness which he so naturally feels at saying *my regiment* ; in fact, such a station is mighty agreeable at eighteen years of age ; I pay my compliments there-upon to M. de Grignan, as he is the source of this promotion, by sending him to make this first campaign of Philippsburgh. Tell me of that dear Count whom I have claimed in my letters, and who has abandoned me. Will not your dear son pay you a visit ? inform me when you have sold your company. My son desires to be remembered to you in the most friendly manner, he is a most admirable and indefatigable reader, never being tired of fine writing, though he has read it over and over. Your sister-in-law has got a *souris* (mouse) *, which does very well in her black hair ;

* The name of a fashion.

what a pleasant folly ! but I find it would also be one to write any longer, it is time to think of one's conscience, read M. le Tourneux, and recollect one's self.



L E T T E R DCCLIV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, December 28, 1689.

WE enjoyed the finest weather in the world here till Christmas-eve ; I was at the end of the great walk, admiring the beauty of the sun, when on a sudden I saw a dark black cloud, very poetical, issue from the West, in which the sun was immersed, and at the same time a shocking fog, which terrified me and made me fly. I have not been out of my chamber or the chapel till to-day, when the dove has brought the olive-branch ; the earth has resumed its wonted complexion, and the sun reappearing, will also make me resume the course of my walks ; for you may depend upon it, my dearest, as you are fond of my health, that when it is bad weather, I take my seat by the fire-side, to read and chatter with my son and daughter. Have you not observed as we have, that the days are not so short as they were ? it is three or four years since I heard this remark made at Paris. The Abbé Tetu
men-

mentioned it at the *Observatory*, saying that formerly the day closed at five o'clock, and that now one might still read at five o'clock. We are so well convinced of this truth here, where there is nothing to distract our thoughts, that my son reads every day at that hour, and it is light till half past five: this is a real discourse that fills a letter which requires no answer. Beaulieu informs me that our Marquis is expected; I am impatient to know a thousand particulars relating to him, and to compare the difference of a Colonel with our little Musqueteer.

A thousand reports have been spread about Rome, equally false, according to the different interest and malice of each propagator. The Courier is, at length, arrived; and instead of all these prophecies, you find that the Pope consents to the Abbey of St. Dennis being united to St. Cyr without any gratuity, which would amount to 80,000 livres; this is no trifling douceur, and will embarrass those who are still inclinable to consider the Ambassador as a dupe, and to think that Cardinal d'Estrées is in the right to question the good dispositions of the Pope. The beginning is in our favour, we shall see the end. I sometimes enclose in your packets the little billet of the Abbé Bigorre, who is very well instructed with what passes at Rome; I believe you will agree with me in this.

Madame de Coulanges acquaints me that the new Madame de la Fayette, was reclined upon a magnificent bed in a fine house; her salloon lined with a beautiful tapestry belonging to the

the Keeper of the seals *; the bed of the chamber decorated with an antient mantle of the order, and the room hung with fine tapestry, having the arms ornamented with the staves of the Marshal of France, and the collar of the order; and many looking-glasses, chandeliers, glass plates, and chrystals, according to the present mode; that she has many servants, valets de chambre in livery, and fine cloaths. In a word, such taste reigns in the house of the new-married couple and in their family, that our Madame de la Fayette ought to be perfectly well satisfied at her son having made such a great and honourable alliance. The poor bride was all this while greatly afflicted with the cholic, which made her very weak, having been blooded twice. In fine, Croisilles informs me that the fever has left her, and that her friends begin to breathe again.

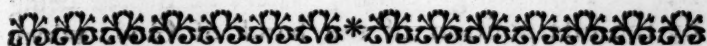
I am very impatient, my dear child, to hear from you on a Friday, and also from the Chevalier, whom you have represented in excruciating pain: whatever passes in your castle of Grignan is a considerable drama for me. I think you happy to be in such good company this winter at Grignan, you will not be sensible of the fury of the North wind amidst your whole family. I return to the egregious errors in which you left with regard to that saint La Garde. I thought him possessed of an income of 28,000 livres; his estate *ten*; his pension *eighteen*; in great abundance; I imagined that in such a situation, a little

* Michael de Marillac, great-great-grandfather to Mary Magdelzn de Marillac, Marchioness de la Fayette, was Keeper of the Seals of France; and Lewis de Marillac, brother to the Keeper of the Seals, was Marshal of France.

assistance might be given his intimate friends upon so important an occasion. I was even a little uneasy at his desire of selling his estate ; at length the amount of all this notion is, that his pension is not paid, and his estate is no longer of any value ; a greater fall cannot possibly be. I have acquainted him with my repentance for having judged so ill ; I love, I honour, and admire the courage and virtue of this holy disciple of Providence. Inform me if many pensions have been retrenched, and if there be no hopes that they will one day be continued ; this is a difficult time to get over.

The beautiful Duchess de Lude has taken to pieces all her fine silver furniture, Beaulieu has seen them ; but as the pieces are good, she touched 27,000 crowns for them, and has furnished her apartments a-new with wooden furniture, mirrors, and glass-plates, which amount to 2000 crowns of this holy poverty. The Rochefoucaulds were all the night in the garden during the fire, and the next day the Abbé de Marsillac and his sisters had a dreadful cough and hoarseness ; their loss amounts to 20,000 crowns. Here I put many things together without connection, I will write better on Sunday, for I will speak of you and all that I shall learn from you ; in the mean while, I often think of my dear girl, and I reckon that she loves me.

LETTER



L E T T E R DCCLV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, January 1, 1690.

I Have not yet received the packet of Saturday the seventeenth, in answer to that of the seventh. I keep an exact account, and there is no cheating of me without doing me a great prejudice, and making me very unhappy; for it is the sequel of a conversation that is interrupted. I hope this letter will come to hand, this often happens: in the mean while, I have a great deal to answer upon the tragical and surprising history, which you relate to me of poor Lausier. Your recital hath all the powers of rhetoric, it suspends attention, it increases curiosity, and leads to an event so melancholy, and so surprising, that I was quite moved at it, and gave such a scream as terrified my son. He came running to see what was the matter; he read this part of your letter, and was affected in the same manner as myself, and cried out as I had done, and even louder; for he was well acquainted with this brave honest man, and we could not help admiring the uncertainty of the hour and manner of our death. All the circumstances of this death led to peculiar astonishment; those fresh dangers, to which he was exposed, in the last siege of Mentz, in which he engaged so romantically, his good fortune in escaping, that strength of constitution, that conversation in
which

which he rallied the Deans, the rendezvous which M. de Noailles gave him, where he missed being by the interposition of the hand of God, which struck him in the street, whilst between the arms of his two brothers, who loved him, and amidst their joy at their again meeting him; nay, the powers of medicine are set at nought, and he can receive no assistance from it; all this is so affecting, and so remarkable, that though it be not the first sudden death which we have heard of, no one, perhaps, so extraordinary ever before occurred; and in whatever place, it would claim attention; but we have the same reasons as you to be affected at it, and to recur from every object to this melancholy event. I am going to write about it to his poor brothers; such losses are very common to them; we take this to be a third brother that is gone. You have most agreeable weather amidst your winter; such weather must necessarily excite the Count to go a hunting; it must drive away your complaints, and prompt you rather to walk than write to me; indeed you are much in the right, such enchanting days must not be lost. Our's have been so shocking, that they were only fit to make us keep by the fire-side, as no body could venture abroad to be an eye-witness of the fog, notwithstanding the ice and frost; in fine, such weather, as is quite opposite to your's, though my son has not been without six or seven neighbours, who played, and were joyous in his chamber. But the weather improves, and the days begin to lengthen; they are sometimes more serene in the months of February and March, than in the month of May, by which we were so greatly duped at Livri. M. de Carcassonne has been with you, he had reason to be surprised that
a man

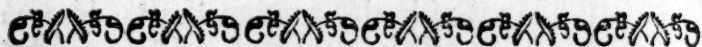
MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE. 193

a man with whom he had just breakfasted, and who was as well in health as himself, should drop down dead. Marshal de Villeroi, in a very different situation, would not believe that M. de G  n  ve * was a saint, and canonized, because he had dined twenty times with him at Lyons.

The interest of the eighteenth denier of Languedoc is not excessive; I imagined that the sixth denier should be explained, it is quite unknown here. The want of money is sensibly felt upon a thousand occasions; there are times when dealers are to be met with immediately for such a commodity as you have to dispose of: now if these dealers are to be found, they cannot make good their payments. I hope that you will not meet with such embarrassment: tell me when you have concluded this marriage, and whether the Marquis is in good winter-quarters. I shall be very curious to know how he acquits himself at Paris and Versailles of all his duties, for he has a great many friends to see. I have desired Beaulieu to acquaint me with all he says and does, and what sort of an appearance he makes.

I comprehend all the unmeaning, vague expressions with which Madame l'Abesse honoured you upon taking her leave. I am well pleased that she did not take Paulina with her! I often think of this amiable pretty girl with affection.

* St. Francis of Sales.



L E T T E R DCCLVI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, January 4, 1690.

YOUR letter of the seventeenth has found its way to me, it was gone to make a little tour to Rennes ; it fills up the space which made me lose the thread of the conversation. I should also have lost the finest information in the world with regard to the *Court of Love*, and my new friend would have been quite in despair at it. His curiosity will be amply gratified, he had received a thousand other informations upon this head, which were of no consequence. This Adhémar is very pretty, and much beloved ; his mistress must have been greatly afflicted to see him expire whilst he was kissing her hand. I have some doubts like you, whether she has resolved to take the veil : this account is quite pretty ; this is a little fragment of ancient gallantry, blended with poetry and wit, which I think worthy of curiosity. Such Adhémar and Castelanes are every where to be met with ; and we find the place of Grignan was more considerable in the time of Frederic I. than in that of Lewis XIV. My son was much pleased with reading this account, and his wife much more so ; for which I thank the Prior of St. John *, and you my dear child.

* The Abbé Viani, Prior of the church of St. John at Aix.
There

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 195

There was in the same packet a letter from the Marquis, which appeared to us surprisngly clever; my son and wife wanted to kiss and embrace him; they wished, in particular, that he might receive your leave to go to Paris; we cannot believe you will refuse him; his style is quite natural, juvenile, and artless, somewhat prolix through a desire of pleasing; all his little reasons are ranged without exaggeration, but placed simply in their proper place and light; what his friends say upon his stay at *Keizerflauter*; his natural and just inclination to come and display a little the Colonel of eighteen, which is all submitted in so affecting a manner to your will, that we could not refrain from tears through friendship and tenderness for this lad; and it appeared to be the most striking piece of eloquence we ever met with. But what is substantially good, is the assurance he gives of always preferring glory to pleasure; that if there were the least thing to be done, he would not think of leaving the army; and we find that he speaks the truth, there is no drawback to make upon what he says, there is no corruption yet in his heart; all his sentiments are genuine, all his expressions have their proper weight: we could not bestow sufficient praises upon this letter (which I have carefully preserved for you) nor sufficiently esteem the writer. I imagine he is now at Paris, where I have a great desire to know how he behaves himself, and a still greater to be acquainted with his conduct at Versailles. It is here that his dear uncle would be useful to him, but it is not God's will; never was the gout so cruel, or so violent; how unhappy! Has he not reason to regret his losses,

and those he occasions his family? What patience must he be master of to endure incessant pain, scarce supportable, and which can be compared only to those of hell; but which are proper to deserve Paradise, if they are considered as inflicted by him, who is the Master of all things, and to whom we should be entirely in submission!

But, my dear, whilst we are upon a melancholy subject, I must tell you, that floods of tears streamed from my eyes, when I pictured to myself the spectacle of that poor Dean*, penetrated with grief, his heart pierced, saying mass for that brother then in the church, still quick as it were, and yet cold in his coffin, bleeding on every side.—Good heaven, what a thought!—Does the blood stream from a dead corpse? It must be so since you say it. This streaming blood then does not, alas! demand *justice*, but much *mercy*; and this poor Dean, convinced of his religion, who offers this great and pious sacrifice for a sinner, whose salvation is dear to him, and whose death is afflicting; who trembling asks mercy for him, who had not time to request it a single moment. This thought, my daughter, is insupportable; nothing methinks but distraction and dissipation can prevent its having the same effect upon every one. The more faith this Dean had, the more he is to be pitied; but he would be still more to be pitied, if he had been above a fear of God's judgment. I recollect the manner of burying at the Feuillantines; all these pious girls prostrated themselves three times, before they let down my poor cousin into the grave, and by moans and

* The collegiate Dean of Grignan.

moving prayers, they intreated God to take pity of that miserable sinner; alas! what a sinner! Madame de Grignan was present, we thought we should dissolve in tears. But what a whim to say so many useless things, in such a doleful strain! I ask you a thousand pardons.

I now return to you, my child. I thought the word *Molinist* interlined, would have made you understand the contrary; I was a little too cunning. The two male visitors were very good company, we had no altercations, we agreed in every thing, and we had the pleasure to discuss and celebrate the greatest, the most important, and the most ancient truths of our religion. We constantly read *Abbadie*, and the Ecclesiastical History; the latter is the effect of the persuasions of the former, it is divine, and gives a glow to our faith.

It is a very lucky thing for Paulina not to blush! This has been, as you say, the real drawback upon your beauty, and that of my youth; I found that when not troubled with this ridiculous inconvenience, I was not always mistaken for another. This is a persecution inflicted by the devil upon self-love: in a word, my child, it drove you from balls and great assemblies, tho' every one constantly maintained the dignity of your beauty; but your imagination was so struck, that you could not support it. Poor Paulina will not be very sensible of this trifling advantage; I am, indeed, of opinion that people do not blush now as they did formerly.

Beaulieu has waited upon M. de la Trouffe from me; he tells me, that he took his

time so well, that his people told him to walk in ; but that he heard him say at the door, *Do not let him come in, tell him that I thank Madame de Sévigné for her compliment*, and was turned back. Beaulieu has been very severe upon him for this affront, as he is every where well received, and minutely questioned concerning me: he is very much offended, and quite in a passion, saying it is the order of the Holy Ghost that makes him so haughty ; but that he would not then send his mules and all his equipage into our stables to set fire to them, as they did at M. de Rochefaucauld's. All he says upon this subject is quite natural and pleasant ; and he has so cut and slashed M. de la Trouffe, that I know not how he will get over it.

I always throw you in the Abbé Bigorre's little billets ; though the Marchioness d'Huxelles, and many others, give you information, this cannot displease. You have insensibly engaged me to relate to my son the conversation you had with Alliot upon *soufre nerval*, *nervous sulphur* ; he is deeply affected at it, and is going to tell you his sentiments, for my part I never shall forget this scene.

Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

Surely, my little sister, some accident might happen to you, were you frequently to talk about *Keiserflauter*. I do not know why my mother concealed from me your adventures with M. Alliot, I was never better pleased at any thing. That expression, so seriously uttered by a woman, who is eagerly consulting about a woman's health, appears to me in such

such a light as I cannot express to you, and cannot be persuaded, except it be that grave account my mother gave at MADAME's of the ball, where the duke of Monmouth was present. Your sister-in-law cannot, without the greatest difficulty, pronounce the name of this specific remedy; she therefore calls it *du soufre nerveux*; you must agree that this sounds better than the other. How sorry I am that it can be of no use to the Chevalier de Grignan—how I pity him! I desire you, my pretty little sister, to pay him a hundred compliments, and embrace him and the gracious Paulina, by proxy, for me—is not this allowable at two hundred leagues distance? Adieu, my little sister, my mother is perfectly well, we govern her in such a manner, that you will have nothing to do but continue imitating us, when she is with you. I pay a thousand and a thousand sincere compliments to the very wise, very illustrious, and *very happy* La Garde.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE' continues.

And I also, my dear child. The chagrin and infirmities which overwhelm him, do not prevent my thinking him *happy*, when I consider the use he makes of them. I conjure him ever to honour me with his friendship. The diminution of the income of his estate astonishes me, it is greater than our's, though this is bad enough. Is your's fallen in the like manner? Tell me, explain to me also how it is, that when Madame de Grignan is with you, there should be eighty or a hundred in your solitude. You say that your affairs require another remedy than being at Grignan, this I am convinced of as

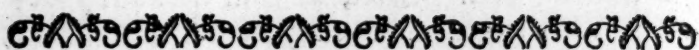
well as you. My health is pretty good, think of your's. I should not be much astonished, if for this last month you awoke just before daybreak; this might be half past six, or seven: this would be as agreeable to me as to you; but to awake at four or five, this is what I call not sleeping, but heating the blood. I believe, in fact, it is Boreas who is calling to you, what are you doing there in my palace, which I am possessed of? why are you not at Paris, Versailles, or Aix? It is very cruel of him to make your apartments so smoaky. M. de Carcassonne appears to me to have as military a turn as Archbishop Turpin. Poor Madame de la Fayette has not yet felt the sweets of her new little household; she has not yet got the better of the cholic: Croisilles writes to me for her; her ill state of health renders her insensible of every thing else. She is a very amiable worthy woman, and whom you loved as soon as you were acquainted with her wit and sense: the more one knows her, the more one is attached to her! We have laughed, and been foolish with her sense; do you recollect? When she mentions you and those times, she raises you above every thing that is sensible and agreeable; but she is too ill to exert her faculties.

Madame de Motteville is dead, will you not write to her brother? I know not how to blame M. d'Aix for what he says as an apology for not coming to Grignan, when he is at the very gate—*how unfortunate he is, and how deserving of pity!* Well, he is in the right; but if you can be satisfied with him, I advise you to be so—it is very unlucky always to have enemies to complain of at court. Adieu, my dear child I love you

you and all your person, as your friendship deserves, which is entirely to my taste.

To Monsieur DE GRIGNAN.

Good morrow, dear Count, you are then at your castle, which was in ancient times a place where Frederic infeoffed people. The first stone has long since been fixed, and the Archbishop designs to place the last. Are you not sorry to be absent from Aix and *Chimene*? No, for you saw her upon mount Pſyché. You are in such good company, that you forget Boreas and the furies; but I conjure you to let the Marquis come and see you this Lent. My son constantly adores you, and his wife is very gallant with your picture; she informed my daughter the other day, "I will say nothing tender to M. de Grignan, for I find I have such a weakness, that I am scrupulous of every thing." Thus are you considered in this little spot of the earth.



L E T T E R D C C L V I I .

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, January 8, 1690.

IT is in your hands, my dear belle, that my letters are changed to gold ; when they go from mine, I find them so gross and so heavily loaded with words, that I say, my daughter will not have time to read all this ; but you too much flatter me, for in conscience, I cannot believe all you say upon the occasion. In fine, take care, such praises and commendations are dangerous ; I will not at least conceal from you, that I prefer them to those of all the rest of the world. But let us be reconciled, for methinks we are somewhat at variance ; I said you read only superficially the Little Letters, but I repent ; for they are fine and too worthy of you to have escaped attracting all your attention. You also affront me by supposing I have not read *les Imaginaires* ; I lent them to you ; how pretty and just they are ! I have read them more than once ; so that upon these mutual offences we may embrace one another ; I see nothing that can prevent our loving each other : is not this the advice of the Chevalier, as he is our confident ? I am, indeed, charmed at his better health, this sentiment is much stronger than my words. But to return to reading, it is greatly in vogue here ; my son has a very commodious qualification, this
is,

is, that he is very willing to read twice, or three times, what he likes and is agreeable to his taste; by this means he enters deeper into its merits, learns it by heart, and as it were possesses himself of it so much, that he fancies he wrote it himself. He reads *Abbadie* with transport, whilst he admires his genius in producing so fine a piece *; when we find an argument well conducted, well concluded, and just, we think we rob you of it, in reading it without you; how this passage would charm my *Sister*! would charm my *Daughter*! Thus we blend your memory in all that is superior, and it heightens its value. I pity you for not liking history, the Chevalier is fond of it, and it is a fine asylum to weariness; some histories are so fine, that we are very willing to go back a few ages: this diversity affords knowledge and delights; it is the small number of your books that obliges you to read Father Coton's Orations, and this scarcity makes you not know what to read. I wish you had not given your son a distaste for history; it is a thing very necessary for a young man of his profession. He has wrote to me from *Keizerlauter*; my God what a name! He does not yet seem certain of coming to Paris; he pays me a thousand pretty friendly compliments, very cleverly turned, he thanks me for the news I sent him, he relates to me all the little misfortunes attending his equipage. I am passionately fond of this little Colonel.

Our Abbé Bigorre strongly intreats me to credit no one but him concerning

* His book upon the Truth of the Christian Religion.

the news from Rome. It is an outrage to say that the holy father is a Spaniard, and that the Ambassador is the dupe; we shall shall see this, for it cannot be concealed, *this spread eagle* will shew us on which side it wings its way. For my part I should be patient, did but Avignon return to you; how happy would it be to wed Paulina to so fine a name. I have a mind to ask you how M. de la Trouffe does; you know that Beaulieu could not inform me: in return I will tell you that Corbinelli is more mystical than ever; he is far beyond St. Thérèse; he has discovered that my grand-mother *, in the height of her soul, was quite distilled in the oration; he has bought a book for me that neither my son nor I understand a word of. In fine, he is always the same man you knew him; he no longer writes to me, this taste has subsided; I hear of him, and as I have writing enough, we have agreed upon this silence, without being prejudicial to our prescribed friendship; you know it cannot be disowned. As to delicate constitutions, they deserve to be confided in; I sincerely acknowledged to you that after the situation in which I have seen Madame de Meri, I begin to think her immortal; and considering the prudence of Madame de la Fayette, and the attention she pays her health, I am of opinion she will get the better of all her complaints. Please God she may, she is an amiable friend, and very worthy of our love and esteem. But now to my health; this is what makes me tremble. God has bestowed it upon me till now in so perfect state, that I am surprised, and it would terrify me, if I were as attentive to my-

* Jane-Frances Fremiot, Baroness of Chantal.

self as you are to me. I was yesterday in those charming walks, and the weather was as fine as in September; I do not let these fine days escape me: when the weather alters I keep my room; in this respect, I am not the same as formerly: I then made a foolish vow to go out every day. I already dread the departure of the Chevalier, and M. de la Garde. Explain to me a little more plainly how came it that the latter's pension was stopped: have they ceased paying it, without assigning a reason? must a poor man accustomed to this *douceur*, remain quite needy, without being told a syllable? It grieves me, but there are some things which require a little explanation. Our good *Berbisi** writes to me wonders of you and your grandeur: a President and two Counsellors of the Parliament of Dijon have been in Provence, they were afflicted not to meet with you, but they sounded your praise to our good President, who is entirely devoted to you. My daughter-in-law is gone to Rennes for a few days upon a relation's taking the veil, which grieves her; she has sent her toilet to the Mint, to do like the rest. Your brother desires to be kindly remembered to you. I have just been writing to Coulanges, he is quite prejudiced in favour of the Prince of Turenne; M. le Chevalier, do not be displeased, it is to degrade this name, that I do not laconically say M. de Turenne.

* President à Mortier to the Parliament of Dijon. Madame de Sevigné's great-grand-mother was a *Berbisi*, and mother to Jane-Frances Fremiot, Baroness of Chantal.



L E T T E R DCCLVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, January 11, 1690.

GOOD heaven, what a new year's gift ! what wishes ! could any ever so much charm me ? I will unfold a sentiment I find myself possessed of ; if it could repay your's, I should be satisfied, for I have no other coin, instead of those amiable fears with the incessant deaths that surround you occasion, and which make you reflect on others. I offer you real consolation and joy, which frequently arise to me from my being so much older than you. The notion of the eldest going first, and that probably and naturally I shall keep my rank with my dear daughter, is what occasions the real sweetness of this sentiment. What have I not suffered at times, when your ill-state of health made me dread an interruption ? these were trying periods, and let us speak no more of them, we will not enter upon them ; you are well, God be thanked, and every thing has resumed its natural course, *God preserve you* ; I fancy you hear my tone of voice, and you know me.

I now come to the Chevalier, I have no difficulty in believing that the climate of Provence would agree with him better in winter than that of Paris. All those, who like swallows, seek
for

for your fun, afford sufficient testimony. But whilst I rejoice at his being sensible of the difference, I am afflicted at his having lost a thousand crowns yearly of his income; by what means? and how? was his regiment worth so much to him? he will sell it then to the Marquis*; but the money arising from it, in paying of debts, will it not diminish the interest of loans? settle this account for me, which makes me uneasy, I cannot image to myself M. de Grignan at Paris, without his little equipage, so decent, and in such good order; I cannot see him walk on foot, or inquiring for places to Versailles, such a thought cannot enter my head; this article is interlocutory; how happily this term of chicanery finds admittance here! neither do I comprehend your sixty-four people besides guards, you deceive me, this cannot be your meaning, you must give me a mathematical demonstration.

As to Paulina, I do not think you will hesitate with regard to the steps you have to take, the good and evil road being so clearly pointed out, and the superiority of your sense will readily direct you to the first: every thing calls upon you to perform your duty; however, conscience and the power you possess are all solicitors in the cause. When I consider how much she is improved in so short a time to please you, how pretty she is grown, you will be culpable for all the omission of doing good on her part. As to reading, you are too much engaged in conversa-

* The Chevalier de Grignan, attaining the rank of field Marshal in 1688, had leave to keep his regiment, that he might afterwards resign in favour of the Marquis de Grignan his nephew.

tion and reasoning to attend to it: we are here in greater tranquillity, and therefore have time for it. I even peruse again certain works which I had slightly run over at Paris, and which appeared quite new to me. We also read again, by intervals of recess from our grand lectures, scraps that we meet with, such as the fine funeral orations of M. de Bossuet*, M. Fléchier†, M. Mascaron‡, father Bourdalouë; we pay a fresh tribute of tears to M. de Turenne, Madame de Montausier, the Prince, the late MADAME, and the Q. of E. we admire this picture of Cromwel: these are master-pieces of eloquence, which charm the mind; it should not be said that these are stale; no, they are not stale, but divine. Paulina should be instructed, and charmed with them; but this is calculated solely for the meridian of the rocks, I know not what book to recommend for Paulina's perusal; Davila is fine in Italian, we have read it; Guicciardini is very long; I should like well enough the anecdotes of Médicis, which are an abridgment, but they are not in Italian. I will not name Bentivoglio again§; let her stick to poetry, I am not fond of Italian prose; Tasso, Aminto, *Pastor fido*, &c. I dare not say Ariosto, there are some passages disagreeable; and let her other books consist of history, let her cherish this taste, which may so long divert her leisure: it is to be feared that if this part of reading were suppressed, there would be scarce any thing to read; let her begin with

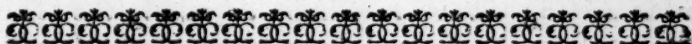
* The Bishop of Meaux.

† The Bishop of Nismes.

‡ The Bishop of Agen.

§ Gui Bentivoglio, Cardinal, and author of the Civil Wars in Flanders, and several other works,

the life of Theodosius the Great, and let her acquaint me how she likes it. These, my child, are so many trifles, there are some days set apart for conversing, without prejudice to serious matters, and in which we take a very sensible interest. Adieu, my most amiable girl, we wish you every kind of happiness this year, and *Quantà va*.



L E T T E R DCCLIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, January 15, 1690.

YOU are in the right, I cannot accustom myself to the date of this year; nevertheless, it has been already begun for some time, and you will find, that let us pass it whatever way we will, we shall soon find the bottom of the bag that contained the thousand livres*.

You really spoil me very much, and so do my Paris friends; scarce has the sun gained the hop of a flea, than you tell me, on your side, when you expect me at Grignan; and my friends desire me to fix from that hour the time of my departure, in order to hasten their joy. Such pressing civilities too much flatter me, and particularly your's, which admits of no com-

* Madame Sévigné compared the twelve calendar months to a bag with a thousand livres, which is exhausted almost as soon as it is opened.

parison.

parifon. I will, then, fincerely rely upon my dear Countefs, that between this and the month of September next, I can entertain no thoughts of leaving this country; this is the time, when I fend my little vehicles to Paris, of which only a very fmall part is gone. This is the time when the Abbé Charier treats for my fines and fales, which amount to ten thoufand livres; but more of this hereafter; but let us content ourfelves with driving away every hope of taking the leaft ftep before the time I have mentioned: I will not, however, fay that you are my goal, my perfpective, you know it well, and that you are rooted in my heart in fuch a manner, that I fear M. Nicole would find much difficulty to lop you from thence; this, in a word, is my difpofition. You fay the moft affectionate things poffible to me, in wifhing you may never fee the end of thofe happy years which you wifh me. We are very far from meeting together in our wifhes; for I have acquainted you with a truth which is very juft and very properly placed, and which God will, doubtlefs, grant, which is to follow the natural order of holy providence; this is what confoles me through all the thorny road of old age: this fentiment is reasonable, and your's too extraordinary and too kind.

I fhall pity you when M. de la Garde, and the Chevalier are no longer with you; they are perfectly good company; but they have their reafons, and that of bringing to life the penfion of a man who is not dead, appears to me quite interefting. You will have your child, who will fit his ftation at Grignan very prettily; he muft for various reafons meet with a kind reception

ception there, and you will, no doubt, heartily embrace him. He has written me another pretty letter to wish me a happy new year; he appears quite forlorn at *Keizerslauter*; he says nothing prevents his coming to Paris, but that he waits for orders from Provence: that this is the spring which sets him in motion. Methinks you make him languish a long while, his letter is dated the second instant, and I thought him at Paris; let him then repair thither, from whence after a transitory appearance, he will fly to embrace you. This little gentleman seems to me qualified for a good match, and if he should meet with you, may easily obtain his majesty's permission for the reversion of your elegant post in his favour. You find that his disposition and that of Paulina, no way resemble each other; they must, nevertheless, necessarily be both possessed of certain qualities of the heart; as to temper, that is another consideration. I am charmed to find that the Marquis's way of thinking is agreeable to your taste; I could wish him a greater disposition for the sciences, and reading, but this may come about. As to Paulina, that devourer of books, I would rather she should swallow bad ones, than have no taste for reading; romances, plays, *Vio-ture*, *Sarasin*, and the like, are pretty well exhausted; has she touched upon Lucian? is she capable of enjoying *les Petites Lettres*? History should come next, and if this does not please her, I pity her. As to fine books of devotion, if she does not like them, so much the worse for her, for we know but too well that even without devotion they are charming. With respect to morality, as she would not make so good a use of it as you, I would not have her thrust her nose at all into either

Mom-

Montaigne or *Charron's* works, nor into any other of this stamp, she is too young. The true morality of this age, is that which we learn in agreeable conversation, fables, and particularly history. If you were to bestow a little of your time upon her in discourse, she would reap the greater benefit from it. I know not whether all I am saying is worth your reading, I am very far from abounding in sense.

You ask me if I am always a little devotee, which is of little value; yes really, I am precisely in this predicament, and to my regret not more. All my goodness consists in knowing my religion, and its signification: I cannot be imposed upon with false for true religion; I extract the intrinsic metal from the dross: I hope in this I am not mistaken, and that God, having already endued me with good sentiments, will continue them to me; past favours, in some measure, make me anticipate those to come; so that I live in confidence, not, however, without its being blended with some fear. But I must scold you for saying our *Corbinelli* is *diabolically mystical*, and your brother, ready to die with laughing, I scold as well as you. How *diabolically mystical*! a man who thinks of nothing but destroying the empire of the devil, who is incessantly united with his foes, the saints of the church; a man who sets no value upon his animal body, who endures poverty with a *christian* and what you would call *philosophic* resignation; who never omits celebrating the perfections and existence of God; who never judges his neighbour, but always excuses him; who passes his life in charity, and the service of his neighbour; insensible
to.

to pleasure and the felicities of life; who, in a word, notwithstanding his ill-fortune, is entirely in submission to the will of God! and this you call being *diabolically mystical*! You must acknowledge, this is not the portrait of our *poor friend*; this expression, nevertheless, carries with it an air of pleasantry, which at first promotes a laugh, and may surprize the ignorant. But I resist, as you see, and support the faithful admirer of Saint Theresa, my grandmother, and the fortunate John de la Croix. Now I mention Corbinelli, he wrote me the other day a very pretty billet; he gave me an account of a conversation and a dinner at M. de Lamoignon's; the performers were the hosts, M. de Troyes, M. de Toulon, father Bourdalouë, his companion, Despreaux, and Corbinelli. The topic was ancient and modern productions; Despreaux was an advocate for the ancient, with one single exception in favour of a modern; who, in his opinion, surpassed, all other both ancient and modern. Bourdalouë's friend, who took upon himself the critic, and had joined Despreaux and Corbinelli, asked him what writer this was who held so distinguished a rank in his judgment? Despreaux would not declare. Corbinelli joined issue with the Jesuit, and strenuously intreated Despreaux to declare his author, that he might read him night and day. Despreaux answered smiling; "Ah, sir, you have read him more than once, I am convinced." The Jesuit resumed with a disdainful air, a *cotal riso amaro*, and pressed Despreaux still more closely to name this miraculous author. Despreaux said, "Father, do not urge me;" but the father continued. At length, Despreaux took him by the arm, and squeezing him very hard, said to him,

" Well father, since you will know, it is Pascal."
 " Pascal ! said the father, quite red and astonish-
 " ed, Pascal is clever as far as falsehood can
 " be so." " Falsehood ! resumed Despreaux, false-
 " hood ! know then that his work is as true as
 " it is inimitable ; he has lately been translated
 " into three different languages." The father
 replied, " This does not make him a man of more
 " veracity." Despreaux was heated, and bawled
 like a madman, " What, father ! will you say,
 " that one of your brethren has not published in
 " one of his books, that a *Christian is not obliged*
 " *to love God* * ? dare you say this is false ?" " Sir,
 " said the father in a rage, we should distinguish."
 " Distinguish, said Despreaux, distinguish the
 " Devil ; what distinguish whether we are obliged
 " to love God !" and taking Corbinelli by the
 arm walked to the other end of the room ; and
 then returning walked backwards and forwards
 like a distracted man, but without ever coming
 near the holy father, and at length went and
 joined the company in the dining-room ; here the
 scene ends, and the curtain drops. Corbinelli
 has promised me the remainder in a conversation ;
 but being convinced that you will find this scene
 as pleasant as I did, I send it you, and if you
 read it in a good humour, I am sure you will be
 pleased.

I am informed that several Duch-
 esses and grand ladies have been enraged, that,

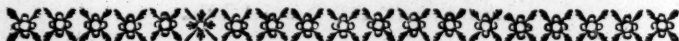
* This is one of those famous disputes which Despreaux is
 said to have supported in more than one place, upon the subject
 of the love of God, and which was, perhaps, the first that
 gave rise to his idea of the epistle to the Abbé Renaudot,
 which he did not write till 1695. See *Ep. XII. of Despreaux,*
and 101b of the Provincial Letters.

though at Versailles, they were not at the supper on twelfth night; these are what are called afflictions. You know the other news better than I do. I have sent Bigorre's billet to Guébriac, who returns you a thousand thanks, he is vastly well satisfied with your Court of Love. I think Paulina has a great genius to know chess; I am afraid she would hold mine in contempt, if she knew how far it is beyond my capacity.

Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

I am very much of your opinion, my little sister, about the *diabolically mystical*; I was struck with this mode of expression, I turned this thought on every side, and I could say nothing to please myself upon it. I thank you for having taught me to explain, in so few words and with such propriety, what I had for a long time in my mind. But what I admire the most in this *mystical* affair is, that his tranquility in this state is the effect of his devotion; he would have some scruples to emerge from it, because he is of the order of Providence, and it would be impious in such a simple mortal, to pretend acting in opposition to her dictates; wherefore we may conclude that he will never go to mass, as the delicacy of his conscience would be thereby hurt. As you have, at length, allowed Paulina to read the *Metamorphoses*, I advise you to be no longer in pain with respect to the bad books that might be put into her hands. Has she not a taste for all pretty histories? there are a thousand pretty works that divert and decorate the mind. Would she not have pleasure in reading many passages of the *Roman History*? has she read the history of the *Triumvirate*,

umvirate? are the Constantius's and Theodosius's exhausted? how I should pity her lively active genius, if you did not give her something to exercise it upon; her conceptions, like her uncle's, are so gross, that metaphysical subtleties make no impression upon her; I pity her, but don't you think I blame her, nor yet despise her, I have reasons for not doing this. Adieu, my most amiable little sister.



LETTER DCCLX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, January 18, 1690.

YOU have too many apprehensions about a health, which was never so perfect before; but this is the real cause of your being terrified, and which makes you find more security in the delicacy of others. My poor child, we are all mortal; but I admired, the other day, with what truth you told me that it never was with regard to yourself, that you feared that death to which we are all sentenced; that this never entered your head: this is so extraordinary, that, after having admired you, I dread this heedlessness to yourself, and conjure you to think of your preservation, in favour of those who are so advanced before you, that you can never reach them: my reflection is more just and natural than your's.

Is

Is it possible that you can find no purchasers of this company? it will much embarrass you and the Chevalier, and is a great proof of the extreme necessity of the times. M. de Pomponne wrote to me like a good friend the beginning of this year; he told me he had not the least doubt that I should pass the winter here, as I could never have more substantial reasons for sojourning. Nevertheless, every thing hath its limits, and I should be glad to see the care you bestow on your turkeys; it is a great pity to be so good, and yet absent, and this upon compulsion: you must then own this is a very disagreeable period. I am very desirous that you should have your son with you, he has languished too long in that plaguy place that is so hard to write*; let him return streight to you, and he will go back with the Chevalier. When I observed this latter disposing of himself for the winter, as if he were a different man; chalking out the time and the necessary measures for his departure, I admired his having forgot how winter operates upon him, and I made no doubt it would not be long before he discovered he had reckoned without consulting the gout; he excites in me such compassion, as I will take care not to acquaint him with. I can easily conceive that the duties of the mistress of the house may sometimes divert you from the office of his nurse; but duties must be fulfilled on all sides, and this you do perfectly well. I think you are very happy to have M. de la Garde. You relate to him many things that you could tell to him alone; this is a great consolation. I conjure him to believe that the only errors you did not rectify, made

* Keiserflautern. The French took it in 1688.

me complain unjustly ; I have loved and revered his merit for a long while. I wish you had by accident preserved the letters I wrote to you upon this deputation, in which I solicited for M. de Grignan's assistance ; I should have desired you to shew him this enthusiasm. I nevertheless said true, and I admire your notion, that, if you were King, you would deprive the Governor of Brittany of this nomination. You, nevertheless, find that no King, from the time of Charles the Eighth, ever thought of doing it ; and, except when a foe is desirous of distinguishing himself by such an insult, no one ever thinks of coming to ask the King the person's name whom all Brittany, in full States, appoints for paying their homage to the King. Is it not natural for a Governor in his province to chuse his deputies ? does not the Governor of Languedoc and other places, act in this manner ? and why, then, should this distinction take place with regard to Brittany, ever free, and whose prerogatives have been ever preserved, and which is as considerable by its extent as its situation ? In a word, did not our great heiress* deserve to have her marriage contract faithfully executed ? For my part, I do not perceive the harm that this proceeding did the King's service, being similar to the rule observed in all other provinces ; if I were in his Majesty's place, I would rather chuse that the ancient custom should be observed, and that the Governor should chuse in Brittany a native of the province, to come and pay the compliments of the province. But M. de

* Ann, Duchess of Brittany, daughter and heiress to Duke Francis II. and Margaret de Foix, wedded Charles VIII. King of France, who was her first husband, and her second was Lewis XII. successor to Charles VIII.

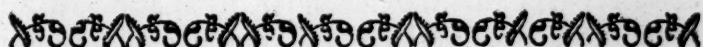
Grignan,

Grignan, and you, daughter, have deserted me ; this is, indeed, a thing I never should have suspected from you, who are so situated as to feel these alterations ; I thought you would follow the example of M. de la Rochefoucauld, &c. But my suit is strangled, it is not examined, I am tried without mercy, and am deprived of my principal judge ; I will oppose the arret of the Parliament of Toulouse ; as Buri said, I will revenge myself presently ; this is the fact. There is a person who, doubtless, has a great share of wit, but it is so delicate and so easily disgusted, that she can only read five or six sublime and exquisite works of distinguished reputation. She cannot endure any historical writing ; this is a great abatement, as it affords sustenance to all the world ; she has another misfortune, this is, that she cannot read twice those books which she esteems above all others. This person says she is insulted, when it is said she is not fond of reading, this is another cause to try. But à-propos to books, my dear Paulina, I have found what will do for you ; it is the *Life of Pope Sixtus-Quintus* in Italian, I have read it with a deal of pleasure, this has just occurred to me. Is it not true, daughter, that this book will divert her ? Good heaven, how handsome and agreeable I think this little girl ! how desirous I am of seeing her !

For this fortnight past we have had such a tempestuous wind, as has made us quite disconsolate ; I have not been able to walk ; since the day I saw the sun perish in that thick cloud, after having shone all the day ; could I serve you better than by flying as I did ? You are an ungrateful girl, if thro' gratitude you do not preserve your health.

Here is a letter of thanks from my good Abbé Charier; had he been willing to write to you only like me, you would be fond of the natural simplicity of his style; but your sublime wit has embarrassed him in a *sun* and an *atom*: do not fail to answer him, pay for me, and assure him that your *sun* will always be very attentive to his *atom*; that you will always see in him the son of his father, and a man to whom your mother hath many obligations. Your brother sees only such parts of your letters, as I am willing to shew him; I need only tell him there is nothing here that will divert him, and he does not think of it. His wife is still at Rennes, where she is confined a prisoner by the waters that are out: she is quite in despair about it. We do not compare our *sun* to your's, we know what degree we are in, and your days are neither so long, nor so short as our's. Adieu, my dear belle, methinks you know and feel how much I love you, and which I need not tell you; nevertheless, one cannot sometimes suppress it.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R DCCLXI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, January 22, 1690.

MY God, what a violent situation you are in! how pressing it is! and how much and sensibly I am grieved at it! But, daughter, how weak and futile are wishes upon such occasions! and how needless it is to tell you, that if I had now, as I have had, some portable sum, it would soon be your's! I am overwhelmed with trifles, my creditors threaten me, and I do not know whether I shall be able to content them, as I was in hopes of doing; for I am quite suffocated by the obligation I am under of paying immediately 5000 livres by way of fine, and the price of the estate of Madame d'Acigné, which I purchased, to avoid paying ten thousand, if I had waited only two years longer. Such, then, is my situation, but this is only to acquaint you with the utter impossibility of my assisting you. Your brother appears to me sensible of your chagrin, and I am persuaded he would perform his duty better than your rich P——'s, if the times were as they have been, that is to say if it were possible to borrow. He wants to speak with you himself, and tell you his thoughts upon what to you. I have also set forth to him the

embarrassed state in which your little Colonel must certainly be; he mentioned it to me the first, some time ago, pitying and regretting, like us, that the Chevalier had not the training of him for the first year or two: nothing could have been so serviceable to him as such a master; in a word, my dearest, no one but God can stop the effects of such a number of disagreeable things, and reduce them to the bounds of resignation, to which you seem inclined. To return to my son; he had some anxiety at seeing a stripling of seventeen or eighteen at the head of such a numerous corps. He has a sufficient remembrance of past times, to know how difficult it is at that age to command old officers; and this difficulty would have been removed, if he had had his uncle to establish him: this is a disagreeable and delicate period. Can you not assist him with some prudent counsellor, to advise him a little? For, in a word, he is alone, and cannot at his age know a trade that requires more experience than any other. I have exhorted you to send for the Marquis freight to Grignan; what will he do during the Carnival at Paris and Versailles, where he will be allured on every side? do you think he will acquit himself well of the duty and compliments he has to go through? I, perhaps, do him wrong; but he is very young, and little accustomed to this kind of business: in fine, I think he has got to go through more than he is equal to. I am giving the pen to my son, I will afterwards resume it.

Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

The maternal uncle is now writing
to you himself, my dear little sister, and who
assures

assures you with the greatest sincerity, that were he possessed of the fortune that is his due, that is to say, if land were money, and were not a mere song, a very illusion, &c. you would see by some very essential marks, how much I interest myself in what regards you; but, my dear belle, I am surrounded only with people whom I may imprison, who intreat me to do it every day, who live in places belonging to me, who pray for me, as they say, and at the same time assure me, that as to money, I need not think of it; such is my situation; nevertheless, if by some very possible means, I should be reimbursed a certain sum that they talk to me of, you may assure yourself I will apply it in such a manner as to rouse the paternal uncles, who, in the midst of forty and fifty thousand livres of rent, see you groan, without doing any thing else but praying for you, as my farmers pray for me. Good heaven! why do they not neglect a little their buildings, which they would rather quit than think of, and why do they not think of supporting their house for the future? Were I to dwell longer upon this subject, I should be in a passion; I will therefore discontinue it, to tell you that I think your son is very young, very green, but little formed to support so great a burthen as that with which he is laden—a regiment of twelve companies at eighteen; if he be easy, they will use him just as they please—if he is a very martinet;—to wave the answer, let him take care never to find fault without reason on his side; for, to say no worse, to exert authority, and be in the wrong, is a subject of great humiliation. If he be obliged to act with rigour, it must be at the utmost extremity—if he avoids this extremity, the consequences are dangerous, particularly with

respect to the old soldiers. In a word, I pity him, he is promoted too early in life, and this elevation is his misfortune ; it were necessary that either the Chevalier should keep his regiment for some time, or that Providence should have ordained that he were capable of serving, and consequently attending to the conduct of this pretty boy ; all these monsters, these dragons, would then disappear, and nothing but beds of roses would be visible. My dearest sister, I sincerely wish that some agreeable subject may excite your joy, that I may partake it with you, as I partake of your anxiety at this moment. I will not, I can assure you, lose any opportunity of diminishing it, if it be possible ; and in this I will be more strenuous than others are cool, or even repugnant.

Madame DE SE'VIGNÉ.

I find that my son is quite right in what he says, what was the cause of our joy occasions your great embarrassment to support it ; but, my dearest girl, only think, for there are times when nothing is to be concealed, that Bourbilli * is your's ; this is a little spot that should be kept for a rainy day ; but you cannot be more distressed than you are at present. Have you properly disposed the good President of Berbisi † ? Write to me, perhaps, he may find means to procure you some money upon this loan, you will not be wanting of my signatures. This is all I can say to you, and the sole object that I can pre-

* An estate situated in Burgundy, which belonged to Madame de Sévigné.

† Président à Mortier of the Parliament of Dijon, and a near relation of Madame de Sévigné.

sent to your view. It is fine talking of your health, it is impossible you can sleep with so many dragons, without your blood being heated, and making cruel depredations: I am quite uneasy about it; and I also pity the Chevalier—what a situation, and what an upper coat is that rheumatism! M. de Grignan appears to me in perfect health. It is true I thought M. de la Garde well employed with his workmen; how could I guess at his situation? much less tell it, this is unaccountable. Nevertheless, it is owing to this circumstance that you owe the sweets and consolation of your society—though you be melancholy, it is a consolation to be together. I wish you could know how much I feel, though two hundred leagues distant, all your troubles. But how ridiculously one writes at such a distance! I often relate to you ridiculous things, for the pleasure of chattering with you; and I do not guess that you are overwhelmed with a thousand melancholy subjects, which makes me really ashamed. Madame de la Fayette mentions you and the Chevalier to me in all her billets; she is far from cruel, and she desires me to acquaint you with all her grievances, and that she could not help being charmed with your son's having a regiment; her little sister-in-law was approved of at Versailles, even by his Majesty; she has given up every thing; she feels the sweets and ease of this new family.

If you had seen M. d'Aix's answer, you would have found it very serious, and wrote in a style which does not in the least resemble his, nor the letter which I wrote to him. The destiny of that man, who would obstinately die at the

foot of a tree, is shocking—this was despair—he stopt there as if in compact;—your account did not, in the least, make me cry out, it astonished me, and affected me in a manner suitable to the subject. You are very cruel to recollect Monfermeil; this is, without contradiction, the most ridiculous period of my life; have you no other in your imagination? Drive that away, I desire you; it was a fate that was predestined me. Adieu, my dearest, and most amiable girl, I am quite unhappy about you; and how can I be otherwise? Two years to elapse, without touching the income of your post; and all that you had to support, your arrears, and Paris, and in a word all. This grand edifice was more deserving of a support, than it is necessary to build new ones. Inform me when you meet with a chap for your company. You say you hear no news! Does not the the Marchioness d'Huxelles constantly write to M. de la Garde?



LETTER DCCLXII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, January 25, 1690.

HOW much I pity my dear child, to read such stuff; I would pity you still more, if you retained it; it would be clever if you were in the same situation as at St. Mary's.
I was

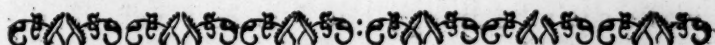
I was acquainted with M. de Sévigné's young mares having run away; this tells us, that we should not leave young folks without reins: sister Paulina, this to you. I have been told that the sun set in a violent cloud on the 24th of October; a strange affair! and that the fog was very thick; this informs us, sisters, that we should not walk at this season. This is the effect of that fine lecture, and all the moral that can be derived from it.

I find that your taste is blinded; the test of mine being just, is that I am fond of your style. It may be said, without any fulsome flattery, that it is perfectly good, and that no one can write better; I am certain of what I advance, nor have your menaces any share in the praise. You have thrown your verses at my head very opportunely, to amuse me and divert me from attending to the shortness of your letter. I think those verses are very pretty and gallant, upon a new subject: my son is quite of the same opinion: we will send a copy of them to our friend Gué-
briac, who will be charmed with them, as he was with your Court of Love. One more word about our lectures: we read yesterday the eleventh book of the first volume of M. Arnauld's *Perpetuity of Faith*; he answers some attacks and accusations thrown out against him by the minister Claude; good heaven, what just reasoning! what harmony! how he defeats his antagonist every moment! We thought of you, finding that you would have been transported, that the book was worthy of you, and this was its elogium.

I informed you, in my last, of my plan for extricating you out of your present difficulty; this thought must be natural to you, and you may make what use of it you please: you know whether I shall want intreaty, when my signature is necessary. Our Marquis is to be at Paris on Sunday the twenty-second. I am told he will be surprised upon his arrival to find an order from Provence to go and join you; but I have so good an opinion of him, as to imagine he will be very well pleased to pay you this visit: and supposing this were not precisely the case, and that he should have some regret at eighteen to depart before the Carnival, I should not for this reason think it at all improper that he should retire a little with his family to improve his growing genius: he is so situated, that he can no longer act the child, and I have doubts that he blends a little of this character with that of the Colonel. He is not *done enough*, as Madame de la Fayette says, another little boil at the corner of your fire, will be of infinite service to him; and if it please God, that he should return to Paris with the Chevalier, it will be of great advantage for him: are not you of this opinion? You will have infinite joy in embracing this child, and not without reason. You have told me nothing about the Chevalier's health; this, perhaps, is a good sign. I will rejoice with him that M. de Beauvillier, after having nine girls, has had the art to get a son: he has followed the advice you gave to Guitaut; if he had been vexed and changed the cards, he would not have had an heir; this folly is very pleasant. Another of your letters came to hand last night, which made my son laugh most heartily. It was upon the transient report that M. d'Ormesson would be Chancellor; you tell him,

“ Bro-

“ Brother, I would have my mother marry him, she will then be the Chancellorefs *Seguier* ; and we will go to *Chaville*.” There is no explaining this flight, yet it makes one die with laughing. This passage would have a fine effect in your select lectures ; I defy you to say it, and explain it to the multitude. I now come again to Madame de Beauvillier ; if you or the Chevalier have occasion to write to him again, methinks a compliment that you have received from Brittany, and which would testify my joy, would be very natural, and shorter than the calculations that are sometimes made. Adieu, my dear belle, may God conduct this letter, and may it arrive at a time when your heart is somewhat at ease. It has snowed prodigiously for these two days past ; this is the first time I have imagined it was winter. My daughter-in-law is still at Rennes, blockaded by the snow.



L E T T E R DCCLXIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, January 29, 1690.

YOUR letters are not yet come to hand, which makes me very dull and sorrowful, nor am I surpris'd at it : I am still more so when I see the couriers arrive in such shocking weather. The waters have been so much out, that my daughter-in-law, quite tired with being stopt at Rennes, risqued the coming hither, and was bold enough to pass through a deep water upon

upon a horse that swam several paces: instead of being well received, after this fine feat, she got well scolded, she wanted to be drowned, and we, who know what drowning is, could not forgive her. She is in hopes that the peril to which she was exposed, will be a means of producing a reconciliation with you, for having left me for three weeks successively; but she was very sorry that she deserved some consideration even upon this score. It is ten or twelve days since we have been abroad; but if it should be fine weather only for two days, we shall find the walks as dry as at Livri.

I had intelligence before you of your son's arrival at Paris in good health. If it be true that the Marquis waits for your answer to repair to Grignan, the Carnival will be over. I send you what Beaulieu has written to me; as this nonsense made us laugh, we hope it will have the same effect upon you. Here are also some verses against gaming; but I always find, to the honour of Dangeau, that he is a constant exception to this too general rule. I wish you could find a chap for your company: it is the constant opinion, that there are occasions when there cannot be any want of money perceived in France; as to me, who begin to be of the opposite way of thinking, I wish this case may not explode the opinion. M. d'Arles would be very happy not to find any to build with; his Council of Conscience is very large, and very commodious, if he approves of this last loan; one might, methinks, rather dispense with the residence; but what will be complete, and which I hope from the good heads of that country, is that the Archbishop will grant both; he will build, and not reside; he will bor-

row, and not pay. Fye upon you for saying bad heads, this spoils all, and destroys even society. It was your fault that I did not do justice to M. de la Garde sooner, and I scold you for it; would you have me possessed of the gift of divination? I reasoned justly according to appearances. Secure me the friendship of this good and holy man; this you are obliged to do. You have not told me what was the game at which the Treasurer of your Province ruined himself; for as to our poor Harouïs *, it was through a passion to please all the world; this was his foible, and he found it was impossible to resist it; I do not excuse him, but this shews, at least, that the best things in the world may be perverted; when they are not regulated by judgment; but this is such a rare failing, that never, perhaps, will be another such example to be met with, founded on the abuse of true generosity. You are quite prudent, daughter, to continue at Grignan; this may be called consulting one's Council of Conscience: those who robbed Madame de la Fayette did not consult theirs; they took from my poor friend, who was gone to rest in a languishing state after dinner, five hundred crowns in louis d'ors, which were in a little cabinet, to which nobody had access but her two maids, her valet de chambre, and footman; she can suspect neither of them: they have all been interrogated, but without effect; and she still lives with these four people, which the most embarrasses her; for the loss of the money would create no great inconvenience, as her children are so capable of assisting her directly with such a sum; but to be

* Treasurer-General to the States of Brittany.

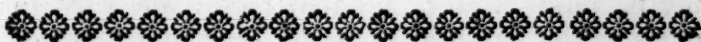
still served by a person who made so free with such a sum, is enough to disturb a woman already oppressed with so many complaints. I knew that M. de la Trouffe kept his chamber; can this be called a cure? Beaulieu highly extols the Marquis's decent behaviour, but he has not yet forgiven M. de la Trouffe. M. du Bois * has sent me his book upon *True Religion*, and the *Manners of the Catholic Church*, translated from St. Augustin. The name of this saint, and the reputation of the translator, will induce us to read it, though after *Abbadie*, *Pascal*, and the *History of the Church*, it is almost martyrdom; at least we think it so, our minds are so biased in their favour.

I wish you as good a state of health as myself; all my little ridiculous complaints have subsided, they will, when it shall please God, return; but I tell you my present situation. We have good milk here, and good cows; we are much disposed to scum the cream of this good milk, and to mix it with coffee and sugar; this, my child, is a very good thing, and will afford me much consolation this Lent. Du Bois approves of it for the stomach and colds, and this, in a word, is the milk-coffee, or coffee-milk of our friend Alliot. This is all a person can say to you, who does not answer your letter, and who sees but *little*, like la Fontaine's pigeon *. But, my dear Countess, I think a good deal about you, I am greatly taken up with you, every thing that concerns you sensibly affects me, I am ever with

* Philip Goibaud du-Bois, of the French Academy, Author of several translations of St. Augustin and Cicero.

† See the Fable of the two Pigeons, Fab. 170.

you at Grignan ; I pay my respects and compliments to all its inhabitants ; I nurse the Chevalier, I pity him, and make melancholy reflections upon his situation ; I feel all the effects ; I converse with the Count, whom I love better than he does himself ; I amuse myself with Paulina ; I think with M. de la Garde ; I give the Prelates some taps ; I will sigh with the Dean ; I wait for the Marquis ; and, above all, I passionately love my dear girl, I praise her good head, her good conduct, and I wish she may persevere in her fortitude.



L E T T E R DCCLXIV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, February 1, 1690.

WE have nothing but alternate snow and rain, accompanied with violent winds ; but when these tempests are over, the days will be long and fine ; but what kills us is, that, let the weather be ever so good, and the time glide ever so fast, one cannot touch one's rents : good God, what a horrid anticipation, ninety and ninety-one, and as far as we can look forward * ;

* M. de Grignan being compelled through the streightness of his affairs, to transfer the salary of his post for the years 90 and 91, he had retired to Grignan to pass the winter, instead of passing it at Aix and Marseilles, or taking a journey to court.
never

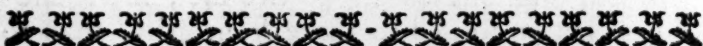
never was there such a dissipation ; one might be a little out of one's road, but to be plunged over head, out of all reach, is a thing that should not be. Such a subject cannot be discussed at a distance, for answers are necessary, but we may sigh for them, and whatever grief may await us, we would not live in ignorance. I want, as you say, the map and the key of your sentiments ; I must enter into your affliction, friendship requires it. I comprehend the only remedy that can be useful to you, but it would be fatal to your business at Court, and your reputation in the Province : you know better than any one that this is not the manner of filling a post, and that hiding one's self in one's castle, without knowing how to get out of it, is not the proper way of passing a whole winter. You are very happy, as you said the other day, that the misfortunes of your poor friends should soften your's ; it is a great comfort to be able to speak of them ; but I am very sensible that, in your present situation, it is impossible to read, and it is only in raillery that I tease you upon this head ; how is it possible to be amused with past times, when the present inflicts the most sensible pangs ? I know what a situation this is, one reads the same page twenty times over ; and I assure you, that though my son reads so well, I am so distracted, and make such frequent journies into Provence, that I could easily comprehend your travels, were you obstinately bent upon reading. All that I admire is, that God grants you your health amidst so much oppression. How sincerely I pity you ! for how pernicious is the present state of your affairs to your poor son's establishment ! he is at length at Paris, it is true he was somewhat tardy in leaving that gar-
rison :

rison : but he is now paying his court at Versailles, I am informed he hopes to sell his company ; this is good intelligence. I am always uneasy when I think of his being alone upon that great theatre ; I imagine after he has been there a little, he will think of nothing but the pleasure of visiting you. Persevere, my belle, to tell me about yourself, without fearing to tire me ; my friendship is better pleased to share your grief, than to be unacquainted with it. You walk about your buildings, and expose yourself to the north wind and the sun, as imprudently as if you had not *wisdom* * by your side. I have shewn my son a letter in which he is mentioned ; he thanks you a thousand times in the most friendly and most extravagant manner for that part which relates to his wife ; but I am not paid to dwell upon this. Nothing can be more pleasant than what you say upon the death of the Marquis d'Alluie, and the consequences you draw from it to begin the assault ; if I had said as much about it you would have been very turbulent, and you would have stiled it one of the fine effects of the visitation. I am vastly pleased with Paulina's letter, I have not time to answer it to-day ; you will laugh when I tell you I am in a hurry, it is true that I am not often at a loss for time ; but we have here at present two men of great sense ; one has been ten years with M. d'Alet, the other is an Advocate ; these two men would do well at Paris, I am going to receive them. The Parliament of Rennes have this day met again in their fine palace, and the whole city echoes with acclamations, and is illuminated with bonfires. I answer my dear little

* M. de la Garde.

Adhemar * with the greatest friendship ; the poor child ! how happy she is, if she can be contented ! there can be no doubt of this—but you understand me.

* Mary Blanche, eldest daughter to Madame de Grignan. She was a nun among the ladies of St. Mary at Aix.



LETTER DCCLXV.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, February 5, 1690.

I Constantly admire that amidst all I know of the melancholy turn of your thoughts, you can write so freely, so pleasantly, and so jocosely. Your brother is ready to die with laughing at what you say of Corbinelli ; and, like him, I think your comparison between the mystics and false coiners is amazingly pleasant ; the one by dint of exhaling their minds, evaporate into heresy ; the other by dint of blowing the fire, produce the false coin ; if they both deserve a gibbet, I say with your saint Theresa, you would be at the foot on which my friend was hung. But here is matter of litigation ; I deny the charge that you accuse me of, saying that *les Imaginaires* † were pretty, I never made use of the expression. This is a *supposition, the subtilities of the Sieur Count de*

† Eighteen letters of M. Nicole, called the *Imaginaires* & *Visionnaires*, which, without all the ornaments of the *Petites Lettres*, are, perhaps, equal to them in eloquence and solidity.

Grignan,

Grignan, as said the Advocate who pleaded for la B— : yes, I maintain, I never used the word *pretty* ; this is a supposition of *Dame Countess of Grignan* ; I said *fine* and *very fine* : the justice of their reasoning lays claim to this elogium, and your praising them was enough to give me this idea of them. Thus you see the want of good faith ; but I will bind them, as the *Grand Council* at all events will not fail me.

I am satisfied with your answers to all my questions, and I should be sorry to have the same aversion as you have to reading things twice : I read over and over your letters, which inspire all the sentiments they deserve, according to the various subjects ; and sometimes you say things in such a pleasant way, that there is no avoiding laughing, as if one's heart was not wounded : in a word, I prefer this reading to all the finest books in the world. You are astonished that I do not think of leaving this country before the month of September ; but consider I am now in the very midst of my business in Lower Brittany, and that the sun, which rises every morning, makes this time come to hand. You excite me to relate to you trifling matters, you enter so well into the meaning of every thing I tell you ; but you are too fearful of laughing at the *distingo*, what are you afraid of ? have they not livings enough ? I hear your answer, the credit of others is above every thing ; well be it so, but do at least like father Gaillard, and as they do at our neighbour's*, where the story was found highly diverting. In a word, my dear

* M. de Lamoignon.

good girl, you will have your son, provided, however, that the king's journey to Compiègne should not interfere with that of Provence. He is paying his court, I should be very glad to hear from him; he has paid Madame de la Fayette a pretty visit; he has been to see Madame de Chaulnes; this is quite right. I would not have him forget Madame de Lavardin, as you are fond of my friends. I have heard your *mystic* praise exceedingly the book upon the *Fallacy of Human Virtues*; he had seen it in manuscript, being a friend to M. Esprit*, whom he consulted upon his writings; he has told you a thousand times that this book was excellent: but you did not listen to him, any more than the praises of Rochon; a taste for these things did not then prevail, there is a time for every thing. I would very willingly read this book upon his word. We have been reading the history of the Conquest of Cyprus; this history is elegant and well written. I am afraid only that Paulina is not sufficiently instructed upon the affairs of Europe; but if she be, she will be charmed with this piece. The translator is related to the comptroller-general (*Pelletier*); my son got through it in four days. Our Carnival begins to day, which consists in convening five or six men and women of this neighbourhood: we shall play and eat, and if our sun should reappear, as it did yesterday, I shall walk with pleasure. The hen-linnet, the tit-mouse, and the wren, already begin to warble, at the first dawning of the spring; this month is often more serene than May, by reason of your north-wind that

* James Esprit, of the French Academy, author of a book upon the Fallacy of Human Virtues.

torments us. One must then, at all events, give absolute credit to your fourscore guests; I must believe if there were too many, the Chevalier and M. de la Garde would advise you to remove the supernumeraries; for in this iron age for you, one must go gently, to avoid digging new abysses. I shall pity you very much, when you lose those two Grignans; their society and counsel afford solid consolation. I should, like you, be under apprehensions for M. de la Garde with respect to the bird-line of the Faubourg St. Jaques; in this respect there is nothing to be done, nor any precautions to take, it belongs to the Holy Ghost. I want to know who is this mistress to my son, whom M. de Grignan has so naturally called by a name, which, perhaps, she does not deserve; for we can assure him, that the Marquis thought himself in love without ever being so. I can answer for it, that his heart never knew any real attachment, but since he has been married; which constitutes his wife's and his own happiness.

Monsieur DE SE'VIGNE'.

Here I am just come as they are talking about me; I take up the pen, and interrupt the discourse, which always appears too long when I am the subject of it. I begin, by telling you, my little sister, that all your reflexions upon the *mystics of the devil*, are charming; he neglects all what the world calls first duties, and directly soars to the seventh apartment of St. Theresa, where he distills and blows to the best of his power: he is still coining bad money, we shall see whether he will one day get to the philosopher's

pher's stone. Who was this *mistress* then, that M. de Grignan took the liberty of naming so familiarly before M. d'Auch? Had you not got her in your mind, when you wrote that your sister-in-law was gone to make either a devil or an angel, in going to assist at her cousin's taking the veil? Let things be as they are, let us mention neither angels nor devils; the first are very well in heaven, and the devils very well too in their station. Let us leave in peace the poor folks who are doing penance for our universal malice.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE' continues.

This is precisely as the thing happened; my pen was taken from me, and now it is restored, and I have hardly any thing more to say, than to embrace you heartily, and ever thank you for your kindness which I find in those natural and agreeable letters. I have offered no injustice to your heart, I know its value and perfection, and if I have given you a moment's chagrin, you ought to pardon me. You seem to have altered your opinion, in favour of M. du Pleffis's *, who acquaints me with the reason; for I do not find he has done any other foolish thing except marrying; this is a disorder that is not epidemical, and which would not prevent his educating your second son in a proper manner: unfold to me then what makes you change your sentiments; it is a matter of consequence to Ma-

* He had belonged to the *Oratoire*, before he was entrusted with the education of the Marquis de Grignan. Madame de Vins had thought of him to bring up her son.

MARCHIONESS DE SE'VIGNE'. 241
dame de Vins. The poor Abbé de Pile is dead
in your country, he went to drink the waters of
Digne for the vapours, which were incurable.

My dear Count, you spoil me, you
destroy me, you praise me, you will make me
become a foolish woman puffed up with vanity;
that is sufficient. We love you too much here;
my son would dispense with his wife's being so
charmed with your perfections; we acquaint her
with your air, your behaviour, your manner,
which she understands but too well. For my
part, I should be much obliged to any one, who
would deprive me of half my sensibility with re-
gard to your interests.



L E T T E R DCCLXVI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Ash-Wednesday, February 8, 1690.

EVERY thing being finished,
daughter, tell me now whence comes it that
Madame Reinié is still with you? do you send
for her to come and speak with you as if she were
in rue St. Honoré, and you at the hotel of Car-
navalet? or does the journey from Paris to Grig-
nan appear to her like that from Paris to Livri?
I cannot conceive what could have induced her
to undertake this second journey. Poor woman!
I really am not astonished that she has pains all
over her. Heavens, how pretty Paulina is! how
VOL. X. M agreeable

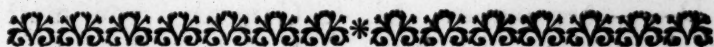
agreeable, how amiable, and diverting is her little vivacity, which I perceive from hence ! Without being willing to praise the quality of imitation, it must be owned, that it is one of those things that communicates the greatest pleasure : as I am persuaded that Paulina will not turn it to a bad use, and that this pleasure will be confined solely to her family, I am very well pleased that she is possessed of this talent, and I hope always to partake, mind me, if *God is willing*. Her brother is a tolerable monkey too, but he has other business upon his hands, he is taken up with his equipage : you will see what the Abbé says of him, and how little attention he pays to the Carnival ; and, in truth, his wisdom and solidity are astonishing. He eats at la Poirier's without any ceremony, or any great delicacy. I wish he would sometimes visit Madame de Coulanges, who is all alone ; she would be charmed with him. But what say you to this company, that cannot be disposed of ? is it possible that so good a commodity should stick of hand ? this plainly shews that there absolutely is no money. How is it then you manage for your son's equipage ? what an increase of expence, and in such a time of scarcity ! this hurts the imagination. I have told you all that occurred to me upon this head. I imagine the Marquis may pay you a visit ; the King's journey to Compiègne, is only to review his household. I know that the strongest proof that can be given of discontinuing a pension is not to pay it ; but what I asked was, whether this was a general evil ; for you know one would not chuse to be particular in one's misfortunes. If the roads are as bad in your country as they are here, I pity M. de la Garde ; all trade is nearly at a stand in this province. But, my dear

dear Countess, how do you do? I left you indulging in bed, playing the fine lady, wishing to be nursed in turn; you can communicate no other idea to me; these cholics are nevertheless very painful, they are real disorders, you are ill all over, like Madame Reinié. Paulina is very pleasant to be unhappy at that verse of the twisting of the guts; it is indeed a shocking thing, to say *her mother conceived her in sin*: this deserves consideration, as many consequences may be derived from it. I find her little imagination soon made comparisons that were very just. We have all our different portions and kinds of wit: were we ourselves to compose the dose, we would infuse some of every species; but we must be resigned in this, as in all other things. I find the Marquis has a good assortment, and particularly with respect to the solid and permanent. As for you, my dear belle, who have received some from such various quarters, you would in conscience be obliged to communicate it, if it depended upon yourself: but why is not a traffic allowed in this respect? Superfluities in one respect might be exchanged for deficiencies in another, and this would confer perfection; it is a pity that this is not the fashion; and that God did not think proper to allow it. M. de Grignan would find a great vent for his sense of justice and harmony; it is certain that he has endeavoured to make us wrangle; what he said of you was so probable, that I really thought it true. But here is a subject of misunderstanding much more serious; you say that I have read over three times the same romances, this is very insulting, these are ancient sins that ought to be pardoned, in consideration of the advantage I derive from being also able to read many times.

the finest works in the world, such as Abbadie's, Pascal's, Nicole's, Arnauld's, and the best histories, &c. This docile quality confers more good than harm, as it does honour to books of merit, and as it is so proper to occupy agreeably certain periods of life. In fine, daughter, I wish you were possessed of this quality; but let us embrace, why should we foment a quarrel, that must necessarily end at Easter? Let us do it now with a good grace. I ask Paulina, how she has passed her Carnival, for she is at that age which enjoys it. We have had some very rational and agreeable visitors: we played incessantly, and I was entirely at liberty. But last night, without having observed any motion, my daughter-in-law retired an instant before supper, and immediately the servant who decks the table entered disguised in a very pretty manner, and told us supper was served. We went into the saloon, which was illuminated, and we found my daughter-in-law in complete masquerade in the midst of her and our servants, who were also in masquerade; those who had the basons to wash, those who handed the napkins, all the officers, and all the lacquies were masked, forming a group of upwards of thirty most whimsically dressed; our surprize was very great, and the mirth and laughter which this whim occasioned, lasted all supper-time; for we neither knew who served us, or who gave us drink. After supper music being provided, they all danced passe-pieds, minuets, courants, and country dances. At length twelve struck, and Lent began. Do you, my dear, recollect the Shrove Tuesdays we have passed together, and where we lay so early in Lent? I am always charmed to meet with you in every period of my life, with the most sensible affection. Adieu,

we

we all love you here, and I love and honour all who are there.



L E T T E R DCCLVII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, February 12, 1690.

I Could wish, my dear Countess, that you had read over your last letter, and that it had appeared to you as it did to us; Paulina's follies would have diverted you a second time; you relate them so pleasantly, that they lose nothing in the telling. We see a little rapid imagination, that sparkles quick at every thing, and which, with the graces of her pretty person, never mistakes its object. My son is enamoured with her, he has so favourable an idea of her, that, in his opinion, she surpasses the greatest of all beauties; he will see her, and have her picture; and from the place where you speak of the Carnival, which she feels in the marrow of her bones, he began to laugh in the manner you are acquainted with, and, reading and laughing by turns, he at length got to the end. Do you recollect when your brother read your son and de Sanzei's Comedy? no one could avoid laughing to look at him. He entered then into this pretty scene, as well as his wife and myself, and we felt the effects of the striking passages; blowing the touch pan, the sword being left by accident at the garrison; the young officer, who was, nevertheless, at the battle

of Rocroi, where he distinguished himself so agreeably by killing the trumpeter who had waked the Prince too early in the morning ; Madame D—— her picture, M. de Grignan ; you must acknowledge, daughter, that these various subjects brought into play by Paulina's vivacity, must necessarily have produced a very agreeable effect. She makes you keep the Carnival whether you will or not. We greatly rely upon M. de Grignan's taste, his laugh must necessarily excite that of the most reserved ; the suspension of the Chevalier's gout, and his thinking midnight the best hour in the day, with your laughing that makes you ill ; sincerely these are marks of great approbation in favour of Paulina.

Monsieur DE SEVIGNE'.

And what can I say, after this, my little sister ? this is precisely what occurred to me. I laughed till I cried at this picture, which you gave us with so much imagination and vivacity. That gaiety which consists in being disposed for every thing, eating pudding instead of beef, and in dancing dances which one does not know, is so much suited to Paulina's age, that one may see she acts her part quite naturally : but as my mother has told you all I thought upon the different scenes represented by this pretty girl, as I should only sully what she says in so brilliant a manner, I shall urge to you very strenuously what she has only slightly touched upon ; this is, that we conjure you in the most serious manner possible, as doth also your sister-in-law, to send us as soon as you can Paulina's picture. Painters returning from Rome frequently pass your way, there may
be

be some good ones at Aix; in fine, we request this pleasure of you most tenderly and most urgently. Any one that can discompose the serious brow of Madame Grignan to the degree you represent, and who suspends the execution of the unfortunate *Sisyphus*, appears to me something more than mortal. But whilst this Captain, who is at one time a youth, and at another an old officer, was boasting of his prowess and good fortune, what said M. de la Garde? was he not moved like the rest? You cannot imagine how much we are taken with Paulina's charms, let us constantly hear of her; she was so little when I saw her, that in truth I have occasion to be informed how she is at present; is there no body of your acquaintance who can give me some idea of her? In a word, my handsome little sister, assist us in this respect as much as you can.

Madame DE SE'VIGNE'.

You see I have not exaggerated my son's infatuation: he tells it you himself. I am also somewhat curious to know where M. de la Garde was, was he a-bed? had he any scruples at seeing this representation? he is, however, the first of Paulina's admirers. As to the portrait which my son requests so earnestly, I advise you to do nothing rashly; it will be time enough when you go to Paris or Aix; the size must be the same as your's by Ferdinand; it would be a companion to that of Madame d'Enrichemont. I find the poor Marquis is burthened with all the domestic affairs; I should have been afraid they were too much for him, without the assistance of Vaille, who is acquainted with all the world, and who

will ease him and conduct him to the ministers; he may also be of service to him in the disposal of his company; such a man is a real benefit. In fine, daughter, as you say, every thing depends upon a head of eighteen, whilst all the rest, which are pretty numerous, are for different reasons incapable of acting. It is God's will that it should be so. It will be a melancholy thing, if the Marquis cannot go to Grignan, and there drink at the fountain-head of good counsel, which he must necessarily stand in need of. I am very attentive to all the sequel, and the answer you will have from Court: I do not know whether I remember right, but I think their proposal was not relished. What! does M. d'Aiguebonne want another defeat? it would be the highest pitch of glory for the Marquis to give him this coup de grace; in this case good Rochon must assist Vaille: but I do not think M. de Lamoignon is inclinable to make you take this step; he will advise you to get letters of state, till such time as you come yourself to complete what you have so well begun, this is my opinion; at all events inform me sincerely of your designs, they are of the last consequence to me. I scold you for being uneasy, when my letters do not come exactly to an hour; why should you rather conclude I am ill, than that the rivers have overflowed their banks? All the inhabitants of the Hotel of Rochefoucauld are driven away by the water, after having been banished by fire; all the lower story is a mere flood. The water runs in our street as far as M. le Jai's; so that, daughter, you should rather be astonished when the couriers do arrive. But really all that you say to me upon this head is so tender, so natural, so replete with friendship, then there is such a charac-

characteristic of truth in all you say, which is so affecting to me, that after being inclined to correct you for your uneasiness, I am compelled to own to you, that I find a sensible pleasure in it. I do not know the reason of your refusing to avail yourself of Bourbilli's proposal: I am sensible of the delicacy of your friendship; but so far from seeing any thing fatal in it, or that can make you think of the future, it would give me real satisfaction, by making me enjoy, during my life, the convenience that you may derive from it; and the more so, as by my reserving the reversion, which these bad times render necessary, I do not see why upon such an emergency you may not consider this expedient, particularly as you have the good Berbisi for a correspondent. Adieu, my belle, I am persuaded that no one can love like you, I will add, unless it be me; but maternal affection is so natural, and filial affection so extraordinary, that whilst I am doing only my duty, you are a prodigy. I, however, believe there is a dose of tenderness in my heart, which operates in your favour, and which other mothers are bereft of; this made me say, some time ago, that I loved you with a friendship formed on purpose for you.

Marshal d'Estreés is going for two months; he will see his brother the Cardinal, he will marry all his children, the people say here; in fine, we shall be without a Governor. I am like M. de Grignan, I would have M. de Chaulnes acquaint you with other matters than trifles; there are many degrees between seeking you by land and waters and the secrets of an Ambassador. I would scold Coulanges for leaving this good Duke; and

yet if his journey were so long, he might be guilty of this incivility.



LETTER DCCLXVIII.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, February 15, 1690.

IT should seem, my dear belle, that no one thought of any thing but of an attachment to you, and the means of pleasing you; and yet it is very certain that a design was formed of pleasing others; there is nothing so easy as deceiving those who do not observe us. It must be owned we have cause to blush, when we testify our repentance, thinking death at hand, and we recover life, and not only life, but all those passions that were thought to be extinguished. This certainly is very perplexing, and should make us fear for every dying person, as nothing but the recovery of their health can shew them as they really are: but God knows their hearts, and that is sufficient. We are frequently obliged to recur to this center of every thing: are you not, my child, immersed in impossibilities? they every where surround you. I really admire you, but I will not allow you to compare your anxiety to mine: I ought to forget entirely my situation, to think of nothing but what concerns you; and this I do. Every circumstance of your affairs is violent and urgent; every thing is pressing, essential, and exposed to public

public view; and I should not think you any more to be pitied; if you were commanded upon the spot to create something out of nothing: this is what contracts my heart, and engages all my thoughts; I do not cast one upon myself: for my troubles are nothing, I am not compelled to any thing: my affairs are in some small disorder, but a little absence will bring all things right; a decent, agreeable, convenient retreat, equally serviceable to my salvation as my affairs, if I know how to avail myself of it, and which luckily happens at the time you are in Provence: you must then acknowledge, my most amiable girl, that I ought not to feel any other ills, but those which you endure. So, my dear child, redress your grievances, and think of me, only to love me; I have long since been more than repayed by your sincere friendship and perfect gratitude. I conjure you to give me the sequel of the romance, in which I find Paulina acts a very good character, as she is upon good terms with the Princess her mother, and lies in her chamber. It was a fine circumstance in her travels through all France, to forget Italy; we desire that the first time she goes to Rome, that she will not forget to take Paris in her way. Beaulieu informs me that the company is sold; and the Marquis writes me a little letter full of friendship; he seems to me quite overwhelmed with business, and so am I constantly in regretting the absence of his uncle, who is not even in Paris at a time he would be of so much service. It would be very unlucky if the Marquis could not visit you in Provence. You have seen by Madame de la Fayette's letters how poor M. de Montausier, after having been ruined *body* and *mind*, now inclines to yield all the *mental* part, and retain only the *corpo-*

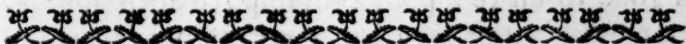
*real**; this seems to me prettily expressed. Alas! this fall of our poor Abbé has reduced him to a mere corporeal *substance*. The praises you bestow upon my letters, are so superior to their merit, that if I were not persuaded you would never unfold, or read them again, I should be terrified at the thoughts of seeing myself betrayed into print by one of my friends. *Voiture* and *Nicole*, good heaven, what names! and what say you, my dear child? Corbinelli, whom I did not acquaint with your wickedness, will write to you by the Marquis; he is going to dine with him at Madame de Coulanges; he is always satisfied with his sense. M. du Bois tells me he has sent you his book. But listen to a miracle: the lady of Marshal de la Ferté is so converted, that no one can be so more sincerely; she is in the hands of good workmen, she finds nothing too warm. Ninon has been astonished, shaken; the Holy Spirit blows where-ever it pleases: but it shed its influence abundantly upon the four first ages of the rising church! what an infinite number of martyrs! the History of your Bishop of Grace is excellent. What Popes there were at that time! all martyrs. What Bishops! where shall we meet with their likeness now?

It is reported that Count d'Estrées is to marry Mademoiselle de Croissi; and Mademoiselle d'Estrées M. de Torci†; here is a fine jumble: it is, I believe, upon this account that the Marshal (d'Estrées) is gone. You will have the Cardinal, his brother, in your province,

* M. de Montausier died the 17th of May following, at the age of eighty.

† These two marriages did not take place.

but you will not see him. It is most delightful weather, all the birds are got abroad ; I walk, and read over your letters with extreme affection ; I should be very sorry if I could not relish them after the first reading.



L E T T E R DCCLXIX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, February 19, 1690.

IF you were to see me, my dear belle, you would order me to keep Lent, and finding that I had no bodily complaints, you would be convinced, as I am, that God had bestowed so good a state of health upon me, only to make me obey the commands of the church. We live well here ; we have not, indeed, the river *Sorgue* * ; but we have the sea, so that we are in no want of fish. We have butter every week from *Prévalaie*, I like and eat it as if I were a native of *Britanny* ; we use it frequently to butter pears ; and we always think of you when we eat them ; my son marks all his teeth upon them, and what pleases me, I mark all mine too ; we shall soon put upon them little fine herbs and violets : at night we have pottage with a little butter, according to the custom of the country, with good prunes and fine spinnage : in a word, this is not fasting, and

* The river *Sorgue* abounds in fish, and waters the county of *Venaissin*.

with

with confusion we say, *it is very difficult to serve the holy church!* But why do you find fault with my milk-coffee? It is because you hate milk; for, otherwise, you would find it the prettiest thing in the world. I drink it on Sunday mornings for pleasure; but you think to apologize in saying it is good to make a poor consumptive devil just respire: really this is a great encomium, and if it makes a dying person breathe, it will make a healthy person live very agreeably. Here ends the chapter on Lent. Let us say a word about sermons; how I pity you to be so often obliged to listen to such long insipid discourses! This kind of patience M. Nicole could never inspire me with, though he has written so good a treatise upon it. When I am as good as M. de la Garde, if ever God bestows this favour on me, I shall be fond of all kinds of sermons; in the mean while, I content myself with the Evangelists explained by M. le Tourneux; these are real sermons, and nothing but the vanity of man could load modern discourses with their present contents. We sometimes read the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom; these are divine, and please us so much, that for my part, I persist in not going to Rennes till holy week, to avoid being exposed to the eloquence of the preachers, who hold forth in behalf of the Parliament. I recollect the rigid fast you formerly observed on Shrove-Tuesday, living solely upon self-love, with which you season every sauce, except that which might have nourished us; but even in this he was deceived; for you sometimes became ruddy, your blood was so heated; you contemplated your essence, like a cock in a pye; this was a pleasant folly. You also answered la Mouffe, who said to you, "*Miss, all this will*

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rot: Yes, Sir, but it is not rotten yet." Good God, who would believe that such a person should have forgot herself so far as you did, and become so skilful and admirable a woman? We should now furnish you again with some love, some consideration for yourself; this you are very difficult in, whilst you possess too much for others. An equipage, horses, mules, subsistence; in fine, to have nothing but perspectives, and yet make such a considerable expence, without knowing where to find the sinews of war; this, my child, can be done by no one but yourself: but I conjure you to think of Bourbilli; here, perhaps, you may find some relief, after having in vain hoped for it elsewhere. Madame de Chaulnes tells me, that the Marquis is very pretty, that he is coming to see her; she does not think he has time to make a journey into Provence. I believe the company is sold, I knew it sooner than you. It is true that your son is a great lusty lad, but he is not so black as Boufflers; I cannot bear the comparison, without it be in the race to the road of good fortune. The Marquis should give you a more circumstantial account of his first journey to Versailles, that is what we want to know, and whether the King took any notice of him, or spoke to him: it is upon such an occasion that a father or an uncle would have been of infinite service. Here is my little billet from the Abbé Bigorre, it pleases us, for his intelligence is more exact than that of others. If the women and courtiers, who think M. de Chaulnes is a long while bringing about this pacification, were informed of all that has been done for these eighteen years against Rome, they would be of opinion that if the Ambassador brought things to a conclusion, it must be a
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master-piece of address and good fortune. There are fifteen or sixteen heads, which our leisure has made us acquainted with, and which are nearly as forcible as the suppression of the daughters of Madame de Mondonville*: M. de Grignan is well acquainted with this; but they have not time to discuss these trifles, it is a more expeditious way to censure, judge, and be impatient. The Cardinal d'Estrées is arrived. I know not whether he will think proper to declare himself the Ambassador's antagonist; we shall see. He went through Paris to go to Versailles, and sent a gentleman to Madame de la Fayette; he is much her friend. The verses of your Adhémar are very pretty; those upon play are very indifferent, but are good as you say for *bout-rimez*. Here are some of la Scuderi's for Coulanges; what do you think of them? These are said to be the last † she will write, as she is going gradually with M. de Montausier. Such a journey, my dear child, is proper to be thought of, after having lived so long; nothing prepares us for it so well as reading, and seeing an infinite number of persons younger than ourselves go first; in a word, it is the universal destiny. But that of B—— is whimsical, to be buried by dint of usury! The fate of our poor d'H—— is much easier to comprehend; passionately fond of pleasing all the world, without bounds, and without reason; this passion eclipsing all others, and even justice: this is another prodigy, but this is dying with a finer sword. You were acquainted with the book of M. du Bois, your taste is exquisite; it corrobo-

* She founded and instituted the establishment of the *Daughters of Infancy*, suppressed in 1686.

† Madame de Scuderi did not die till 1701, aged ninety-four.
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rates the truth of our religion; I think it very fine; I have not yet got to the *Manners of the Church*; I will not thank M. du Bois, he is too happy to obtain your approbation; but I will thank M. de Grignan for his goodness in remaining with you and his amiable family. For my part, I am always with you, as I have told you, and you incessantly engage my thoughts in these woods, where the sun shines as in Provence, and where I read over your letters with so much pleasure.



L E T T E R DCCLXX.

To the same.

The Rocks, Wednesday, February 22, 1690.

THE letter you wrote to the Abbé Charier is a master-piece of its kind; it was really a difficult task for you, somewhat unacquainted with the subject, but you have made such a proper use of the Abbé de Kimperle, Madame de Sévigné, M. Charier's son, and Madame de Grignan, that there is not a single word without its weight, or being essential. I am persuaded you did not feel all the excellence of this billet, it escaped you; but I pay it the honour that is due to it, and am charmed with it; it could not come more opportunely to assist me in thanking the Abbé, for having concluded a very important affair for me in Lower Brittany; I think I have acquitted

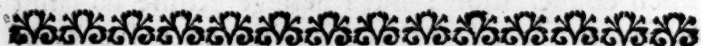
quitted myself in transmitting to him your amiable letter.

Now to come to you, my dear ; you say nothing about the first minister ; this affair must, nevertheless, necessarily be attended with consequences. How have you contrived about your son's equipage ? I am before-hand with you in the intelligence of his company being sold. I do not believe he will have time to pay you a visit, this afflicts me as well on your's as his account. I am told he is a lusty lad, and that one must think of his father's shape ; he is at the same time commended for his decency and prettiness ; but it is a misfortune that upon his first appearance at Court, this first *coup-d'oeil*, the little Colonel was not supported by any of his relations ; for my part, considering how much he had upon his hands, I think he has acquitted himself miraculously well.

M. de Chaulaes writes to me from Rome a long friendly letter, and complains that I abandon him in his solitude ; I tell him it is because I have not time to write to him, that I am overwhelmed with business, and such stuff. You will find by Bigorre's little biller, that we have reason to hope those long and difficult negociations will, at length, be crowned with success, and that what might be considered as impossible for an Ambassador less accustomed than this to the manners of Rome, will infallibly be brought to bear. You will, at least, find that the King is satisfied with his Ambassador, and pays him well. Cardinal d'Estrées has seen Madame de la Fayette, he is returned from Turin, this furnishes matter for
much

much conversation ; but I believe Rome will not be forgot : it is said that his Eminence speaks of the Pope, but does not mention the Ambassador's name ; this appears to me as difficult as playing at that game in which neither *yes* nor *no* must be uttered. Is it true that M. du Pleffis is returned to Paris ? You have not told me what made you alter your opinion concerning him ; I found that you were satisfied with him. The solicitude and attention you pay your mamma make you too amiable ; I am always very well, the abstinence of Lent is salutary ; send us some of your fine Lisle* trouts ; and we will send you some butter that will cherish your heart. A thousand friendly regards to M. de Grignan ; I flatter myself if he were here, he would be tempted to walk through the variegated alleys, which would amuse him. Adieu, my dearest girl, I cannot tell you how much I love you, nor how essential your friendship is to the repose of my life.

* A little town in the county of Venaissin.



L E T T E R DCCLXXI.

To the same.

The Rocks, Sunday, February 26, 1690.

I Never thought I should have wept so much for la Chau ; but it is impossible to read your account of his poor wife's natural and violent affliction, without being moved, and paying the tribute of involuntary tears. This ill fortune is somewhat peculiar, and such a destiny as nothing could prevent. The man is hurried, he wants to get to his journey's end, he is advised not to expose himself for very substantial reasons, he is at least advised not to go into the little boat ; but he will listen to nobody, he must go, and be punctual to his appointment ; death waits for him at a particular spot upon the Rhone ; he is to be there, and must perish. Good heaven, my dear child, how all this is settled ! Every one sees his own fate in this accident, and his wife's grief becomes their own ; as we are exposed to the like perils, we weep through a kind of interest, when we imagine we weep for the misfortunes of others. Christianity dictates to us that we should at first think of the salvation of this poor man ; but his wife must afterwards be grieved to lose 4000 livres : if the dead body should not float, or the violence of the Rhone should throw it beyond Arles upon some unfrequented shore, Providence will dispose of this gold

gold sewed up in his wet coat, as of every thing else.

I highly approve of the resolution of not sending for the Marquis, this is the surest way: this journey would be both expensive and fatiguing, solely to indulge your affection; support this like many other things, and rather wait till he is a Brigadier or a Field-Marshal, than make him run about now. Beaulieu informs me he is quite overwhelmed with business, and that he minds nothing else. Is it possible that he should visit Madame de la Fayette before Madame de Vins? I highly blame him, and I am as jealous upon this occasion as you are, for I frequently find myself in your place; every reason should have induced him to have flown to Madame de Vins; she wrote to me the other day that she was very desirous of seeing him, and to observe the difference and change between infancy and youth. He has waited upon Madame de Lavardin, he will have time to pay her another visit.

M. de Grignan has resolved upon a very precipitate journey; it is very difficult to avoid such races, when one commands singly in a province, whether they be for the service of the King or the honour of the post. You never examine thoroughly into this matter, except for M. de Grignan, this is natural enough: but this example should extend farther. Let us talk of the Cardinal de Forbin*; the courier who brought the news of his promotion was only seven days

* Touffaint de Forbin de Janfon, Bishop of Beauvais, was included in the promotion of eleven Cardinals made by Alexander VIII. in the beginning of February 1690.

upon the road. M. de Beauvais was transported with joy. The King is quite satisfied with his Ambassador; it is very probable that he will work all the miracles that are to be done at Rome. Madame de Chaulnes writes to me in a stile of triumph, she is merry, and not without reason. We must, however, write to this new Cardinal, which I have just been doing, and I am certain you will not fail doing the same. *No enemies*, my dear child, let this be your maxim, it is equally christian and political; I not only say *no enemies*, but also *many friends*; you have been sensible of the good effect in your law-suit, you have a son, you may stand in need of those whom you may now think can never serve you. We are deceived, see how Madame de la Fayette abounds with friends on every side and of all ranks. She has a hundred arms, and they all serve her; her children feel the good effects; and daily thank her for having had such a pliant disposition: an obligation which M. de la Rochefoucauld conferred upon her, made her family now so prosperous. I am certain that for some years you have been of this way of thinking.

You explain very well Madame Renié's conduct; it is mighty pleasant to think of her leaving Paris, her husband, all her business, to fly about for three or four months *all over* Povençe asking for money, without getting any, fatiguing herself, returning, after being at great expence, and moreover getting the rheumatism! for consider she has complaints *all over* her; and such as at length defeat you.

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I am much pleased at Paulina's fondness for M. Nicole; this is a sign she reads him with attention; this taste gives me the highest opinion of her sense; I am also fond of the rage she is in that the Bishops do not fight for promotion. But, my dear, do you faithfully believe, that nothing more is necessary than giving us the first volume of the romance of the *Princess*, the *Infanta*, or the *First Minister*, as prettily as we have seen it *, and that we should stop here? I will not allow it, I absolutely insist upon knowing what is become of that good and just resolution of the Princess? I am afraid it has vanished in the necessity of the times, the great want of a *minister*, the sudden journey, the impossibility of gathering together the *Sybil's leaves* idly and incautiously scattered to the winds for ten years. In fine, I fear your good intentions will have no effect, as has been so often the case for these twenty years; this story requires a sequel, which, however, should not be too serious with regard to your affairs. I must also be informed of the success of M. Prat's journey to the enraged lover of Princess *Truelle*. I should like to know who were the confidants of the *first minister* and the *favourite*, who received the couriers. Tell me if you are always satisfied with *Flame* *, he is a very considerable character in your household. I want to know about the Count's journey, and if the Treasurer will be appointed agreeable to his intentions; here are a number of questions, my dearest girl, for which I apologize. You are too good to be fond of my letters; when you receive three at a time you say

* This was an account, in the form of a romance, of what passed in M. de Grignan's family.

* Maitre d'hotel to M. de Grignan.

you are rich, but what fatigues it lays you under. They are so very long, that you should not answer them so very minutely. Adieu, my dear belle, how does Lent agree with you? for my part, I like it very well. I took this morning a mess of the milk-coffee, I am not yet surfeited with it, any more than sermons, for we touch none but those of M. le Tourneux and St. John Chrysostom. It is very agreeable weather, the winter is over, and we have a prospect of spring that is superior to spring itself.



F I N I S.